Artak Beglaryan, State Minister of Artsakh Republic Addressing the 102nd Annual Banquet of the AMAA



LV 4
Oct-Nov-Dec
2021

Dedicated to the Memory of Peter Kougasian, Esq., Former AMAA VP





SINCE 1918

ARMENIAN MISSIONARY **ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**

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Two Perseverant Heroes

But the one who endures to the end will be saved. Matthew 24:13

By Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO

Times and circumstances demand expectations which, if taken seriously and exercised properly, will bring in the crown of righteousness.

I cannot imagine a more fitting place to ponder about perseverance than in my native Homeland, Armenia, which struggles to recover from a historical assault that shattered its self-belief and depressed its psyche.

That was a year ago, but the dismal remnants of which, as I witness on the ground today, persist in segments of Armenian society.

During the fall of 2021, the AMAA encountered two amazing heroes whose fearless struggle in

life and persistence in a course of action in spite of conceived unsustainable difficulties and obstacles makes them enviable role models.

This issue of the AMAA News spotlights their lives. One in his joining the Lord and the other in his recent revelation.

For decades, Peter Kougasian served as an AMAA Board member, Armenia Committee Chair and Vice President. A man of deep faith and unfathomable whit, Peter was a multi-talented human being. His love of music, magic and ministry, in addition to a stellar professional career at the New York District Attorney's office placed him on a different plateau.

During the past several years, Peter was assaulted by a vicious and brutal disease, ALS, which eventually laid him physically incapacitated in a hospital bed. Peter persevered fighting a heroic battle armed with faith and utilizing every technological invention available to connect, communicate and create. Peter's legacy of endurance and perseverance is a model to follow.

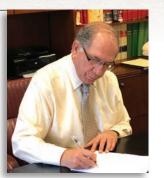
In October, Artak Beglaryan, State Minister of Artsakh Republic, was the guest of honor at the AMAA Annual Meeting and keynote speaker at the Banquet in Fresno, California. Artak lost his eyesight as a teen in a landmine explosion. Soon after, he

also lost his father. Artak would never give up. As a fighter, he extensively struggled in life. Armed with faith and courage, Artak persevered and conquered all obstacles to gain vast knowledge, higher education and multiple degrees. He climbed the ladder of greatness through humility, hard work and the Christian spirit of service, which he attributes to have gained at AMAA summer camps in Stepanakert. Artak brought us inspiration, courage and fortitude from our historic highlands, which remain wounded but upbeat and forward-looking.

Two perseverant heroes to look up to, emulate and overcome the odds.

Brighter days are ahead for our people.

Thank you for your support.



November 22, 2021 Yerevan, Armenia



Artsakh is at the Heart of AMAA Annual Meeting and Banquet

Bedrosian Family Honored for Support of Camp Ministry

By Philip Tavlian*

he Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) emerged from the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020 to hold an outstanding global convocation in the Great Central Valley of California in 2021.

The AMAA held its 102nd Annual Meetings October 21-24 on the Campus of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church in Fresno, CA. The missionary arm of the Armenian Evangelical Church worldwide, the AMAA gathering included meetings of the Armenian Evangelical World Council (AEWC) with delegates from the Armenian Evangelical Unions of North America, France, Near East, Republic of Armenia, and

Eurasia as well as the Stephen Philibosian Foundation in attendance.

The 102nd Annual Membership Meeting took place in the Pilgrim Sanctuary on Saturday morning, October 23, and was streamed virtually via Zoom Video.

The Saturday sessions culminated in the 102nd Annual Meeting Banquet dedicated to The Artsakh Republic. The Banquet took place in the Fellowship Hall of First Armenian Presbyterian Church, ten city blocks distant from Fresno's Historic Armenian Town.

Guests arrived to find a hall decorated in the colors and embellishments of the Autumn Harvest. Banquet Co-Sponsors and Co-Chairs John Abdulian, M.D. and LindaKay Bedrosian Abdulian welcomed the attendees to the sold-out event. Mrs. Abdulian, President of National Raisin Company and AMAA Board Member, served as Master of Ceremonies and thanked AMAA President Nazareth Darakjian, M.D., and Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian for their servant leadership.

Tenor Misak Israelyan, a native of Vanadzor, offered stirring renditions of the anthems of the United States of America and Republic of Armenia. Reverend Gregory Vahack Haroutunian, Senior Pastor of FAPC, offered the prayer of invocation.

Guests screened a special video on the AMAA Camp Ministry in Artsakh, which

began near Stepanakert in 1995 and moved to Sushi in the summer of 2003. The video depicted a quarter century of AMAA Camp ministry in Artsakh, with more than 800 young people participating in each annual summer session. The video also saluted Carlotta and the late Ernest Bedrosian, Katherine and the late Krikor Bedrosian. Kenneth and Jane Bedrosian, and their extended family for faithful sponsorship of AMAA's Camp Bedrosian in Sushi since 2003. The campsite was lost to the Azeri military in the 44-day war that ended November 10, 2020. Executive Director/CEO Khanjian nevertheless advised the Banquet guests, "Bedrosian Camp is not a building, land, or soil—it is spirit. We will build a camp in Sushi one more time." President Darakjian presented an oil portrait of Camp Bedrosian to the Bedrosian Family and Harout Nercessian, AMAA Armenia Representative, presented the family with albums of photographs from the 25-year camp ministry. Speaking for the extended family, AMAA Board Member Bryan Bedrosian offered moving remarks in the English and Armenian languages.

Guests dined on beef filet and chicken kebab and accompaniments, prepared by the Holy Trinity Men's Society, and served by the employees of National Raisin Company. Following the meal, Tenor Israelyan offered the venerable hymn, "How Great Thou Art," in the English language and the Artsakh anthems, "Life and Battle" and "We Will Live," in the Armenian language.

Her Excellency, Lilit Makunts, newly appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to the United States marked her

Rev. Gregory Haroutunian, Senior Pastor of FAPC.

first visit to California at the Banquet and warmly saluted the AMAA for offering humanitarian aid, inspiring the Armenian people to hope for a better life and future, and for emphasizing the education of youth. She concluded her remarks by saying, "After the 44-day Artsakh war, we have only one place to go—forward!" The Honorable Armen Baibourtian, Ph.D., Consul General of the Republic of Armenia in Los Angeles, expressed delight at being present for the Banquet and described Fresno as "the place where our Armenian roots are in the Western United

States." Consul General Baibourtian was accompanied by the Honorable Berj Apkarian, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Armenia in Fresno since 2014.

The Banquet Committee introduced the keynote speaker with an AMAA video entitled, "A Success Story Against All Odds." Artak Beglaryan, State Minister of the Artsakh Republic, lost his vision in a landmine incident in 1995. A onetime camper at the AMAA Camp in Stepanakert, Beglaryan went on to study at Yerevan State Univer-



Armen Baibourtian, Consul General of RA in Los Angeles.



Banquet Co-Sponsors and Co-Chairs John Abdulian, M.D. and LindaKay Bedrosian Abdulian.

sity, University College London, and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in Medford, Massachusetts. He served as Human Rights Ombudsman of Artsakh for two years and was appointed State Minister on June 1, 2021.

He opened his Banquet remarks by saying, "It's symbolic to be in Fresno because it is the symbol of survival and revival after the Genocide of 1915. The example of Fresno will be quite encouraging to us." Beglaryan examined the future of Artsakh following the



Rev. Nerses Balabanian, Senior Pastor of Pilgrim Church.

44-day war and cited long-term and short-term challenges. The long-term challenges include: (1) security; (2) demography; (3) economic development; (4) government reforms; and (5) education. Beglaryan said the short-term challenges include: (1) housing; (2) social and labor productivity; (3) physical and psychological rehabilitation of the populace; (4) infrastructure; and (5) institutional capacity. To address these challenges, Minister Beglaryan called for self-analysis at all levels, unity, strategic thinking, patience, persistence, and an attitude of service. He concluded his address by saying, "Jesus sacrificed His life to give us a chance; the Artsakh soldiers sacrificed their lives for the same goal. We should so live our lives that their lives were not given in vain."

Mr. Khanjian presented Minister Beglaryan and his advisor, David Akopyan, with a variety of gifts, including a framed motto, "Perseverance—Never Give Up!" Khanjian thanked the Host and Banquet Committees and the Armenian Community of Fresno for their warm hospitality. He concluded with the words of Jesus of Nazareth: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.' [Mark 16: 15]. AMAA's march goes on!" Reverend Albert Paytyan, President of the Union of Evangelical Churches in Armenia, offered the benediction and Reverend Nerses Balabanian led the singing of the Doxology (Park yev Badeev).

The 102nd Annual Meetings concluded with a service of worship on Sunday, Octo-

ber 24 at Pilgrim Church. Reverend Doctor Vahan H. Tootikian conducted the Installation Service of new AMAA Board Members and Reverend L. Nishan Bakalian offered the Memorial Prayer. Reverend Doctor Haroutune Selimian of Syria delivered the worship message in Armenian and Reverend Doctor Ronald Tovmassian of Southern California delivered the worship message in English.

The 102nd Annual Meeting Host Committee included Reverend Nerses Balabanian, Senior Pastor of Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church of Fresno; Reverend Kevin Kasper, Associate Pastor of Pilgrim Church; and Edward and Roseann Saliba, Co-Chairs.

The Annual Meeting Banquet Committee included Dr. John and LindaKay Bedrosian Abdulian, Co-Chairs; Executive Director/CEO Khanjian; Katherine Bedrosian; Jane Bedrosian Asmar; Louisa Janbazian; Christine Kutlu; Magda Poulos; Nancy Rivera; Missy Karabian Statler; and Marie Viducich.



* Philip Tavlian is a member of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno, CA.



On Tuesday, October 26, 2021, Artak Beglaryan, State Minister of Artsakh Republic, awarded Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO, with a Commemorative Medal for his long-time humanitarian service to the Homeland.

"I am truly humbled with this notable and surprise honor. I am always grateful to my Creator for the opportunity to serve my people. My commitment to Artsakh and its people is forever," said Mr. Khanjian and thanked Mr. Beglaryan for this honor.



State Minister of Artsakh Republic
October 26, 2021
Stepanakert
Awarding a Medal by the State Minist

Re: Awarding a Medal by the State Minister

Based on the decision N 44 of the Government of the Artsakh Republic of October 12, 2017, approved by 3rd sub-item of the 18th point of the N1 appendix:

I ORDER

To award the Executive Director/CEO of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, Zaven Khanjian, with the Commemorative Medal of the State Minister of the Republic for his long-time and respectable humanitarian services to the Homeland.

Artak Beglaryan State Minister of Artsakh Republic



Artak Beglaryan

State Minister of the Republic of Artsakh

Speech at AMAA's 102nd Annual Meeting Banquet

ear friends, dear compatriots, beloved soulmates, It's my pleasure and honor to be here to talk to you and to have the invitation of the AMAA as special guest. It's my honor also to be in Fresno for the first time and to talk about this topic and to be hosted by the Bedrosian Family. It's symbolic to be in Fresno because Fresno is the symbol of Armenian survival and revival in the United States after the Armenian Genocide, Fresno is the symbol of Armenian development in the US after the Armenian Genocide. Since we are talking about Artsakh now, I am sure that the experience and the path of Fresno Armenians will be guite useful, guite helpful, and encouraging for us. It's my pleasure to be hosted by the AMAA because, as you

spheres which are quite strategic for us. The results are visible now after the war too.

What we have in Artsakh? I know that many of you, all of you have that question. What kind of future we should have, we are going to have in Artsakh? I would stress some points.

First, we should understand that we have both long-term and short-term doings in Artsakh. The long-term doings, I would build on five pillars. First pillar is security because security is a must. In order to have all of the other pillars for a long time, and in order to have Armenian Artsakh forever. In terms of security, you know what we had during the war, what we have now after the war. You know that Russian peacekeepers are insuring, guaranteeing security there. In general, that's successful in this one year. In



AMAA always made quite wonderful and powerful and strategic investments in the lives of Artsakh people in social development, in education, and in many other spheres which are quite strategic for us. The results are visible now after the war too.



know already, AMAA has done a lot in my life, especially in my childhood. But not only mine, but also many Armenian families, many Armenian children since 1995.

AMAA always made quite wonderful and powerful and strategic investments in the lives of Artsakh people in social development, in education, and in many other parallel with that, we are doing our best to improve our own security system. Not only military, but also political and many other areas of security. But, we are not alone, our security is based on not only international and Russian guarantees, but also Armenian guarantees, guarantees of the Republic of Armenia, but also guarantees of worldwide



Armenians. Everyone, all of you, each of you is a part of our security system for a long time. In the short period, in the upcoming years, for sure you know that the security guarantees are given by Russian peacekeepers. We hope and we insist that Russian peacekeepers should stay in Artsakh for a long time unless the conflict gets settled finally. Since we have the Azerbaijani and Turkish claims and their Armenian-phobic policies are continuous, that's why we think that conflict settlement is not a short period, is not visible in a short period. That's why we want to have additional international security guarantees now with the face of Russian peacekeepers.

Demography, the second pillar. Now we have over 120,000 Armenians living in Artsakh. Before the war, we had 150,000 living there. The majority of these 30,000 are internally displaced persons living in Armenia. A part of internally displaced persons have returned to Artsakh and living in temporary housing conditions, waiting for final solutions for their housing. This number, 120,000, shows our goal, our persistence to live in Artsakh, to create in Artsakh, and also to have Artsakh forever. It means that each family has its own investment in Artsakh, in the future of Artsakh, regardless of any kind of uncertainties on security, on development and many other areas regarding the future of Artsakh. On demography, the first goal Artsakh government has is to solve the housing problem in three years with support of Armenian diaspora and Armenian government and we are going to build over 6,000 new houses and apartments in order to return our internally displaced persons to their Homeland. After this and in parallel with this, we are making a new strategy, demographic strategy in order to have both natural growth for a long time, but also mechanical growth for repatriation. We hope to have Artsakh in 10, 20, 30 years with better demographic conditions because as much as Armenians are living in Artsakh, we will have a better guaranteed future in Artsakh. That's a must for us.

The third pillar is economic development. Though we have worse conditions now than before the war, but we are sure that even now, we should have favorable conditions for economic development. We want to restore our economic development growth and to build Artsakh better than before the war. With support of all Armenians and the Armenian government, we hope to have in a few years a sustainable, economic growth in Artsakh. Based on agriculture, based on construction, IT sector, some service and some productions including food

The fourth pillar is **good governance**. All of these areas and other areas that I didn't mention are connected, are dependent on good governance. We are planning to make reforms in the government system in order to have better governance in Artsakh. Without good governance, I'm sure that we can't have the Homeland that we are dreaming of. We have many ideas, but still we are making strategies. That's why I can't give details to you on this area.

The fifth pillar for me, the best and most important one, is **education**. Without education, nothing is possible in the longterm. Because we want to rely on education in order to solve our long-term problems including security, demography, economic development, good governance, etc. We are sure that with good education, everything could be possible in certain time for sure.

In short term, especially relating to war consequences, we have again five types of humanitarian problems. The first one is housing that I mentioned in demography. The housing problem is a short-term problem, firstly for the internally displaced persons, but also in a longer period it's a serious problem for our demography because we have lots of families including non-internally displaced persons who can't plan their life, can't have new babies just for this reason, because they don't have their own houses. They don't have their own apartments. That's why it's a longer problem for us than three years, but with support of Armenian government and Armenian diaspora, we hope to solve this issue in a few years. After the three-year period. We are now building twenty new communities in Artsakh for internally displaced persons and for occupied communities, but it will not be enough. We are planning much more as I said.

The second problem is a social problem, social and labor problem for internally displaced persons. Because people lost their job, people lost their properties, people lost even documents, clothes, everything. In a shorter period in the first month, we and you and the whole Armenian world gave short term humanitarian aid to Artsakh people. It was the response, the reaction of the first consequences of the war. Now we are jumping into the recovery, long-term recovery period. In this period, we are going to build new workplaces and to give people some opportunities to have their own income. In other words, in the first months, we were giving fish, now we are going to teach them fishing. It's a principle for us, for the government. I am sure that all of you agree with us that long-term development and recovery supports new workplaces and income generation program.

The third humanitarian issue is physical and psychological rehabilitation of our people. Actually, the whole Artsakh population has psychological traumas because of the war and because of the ongoing uncertainties and some security frights. Many of them also have physical traumas and physical issues which should be solved, rehabilitated with the support of us. We have a rehabilitation center. We have improved the conditions of that center, but it's not enough. We are going to make better conditions for them, but also we are going to have a new system of social psychological support by the government. Here, the AMAA example is quite useful for us, especially the "Shogh" Centers. We are going to have a new institution with social workers and we have started this reform. I guess in a few months, we'll have the whole institution there. We think that in a few years we will have better psychological and mental conditions including psychological, post-war psychological traumas will be solved in general.

The fourth problem is **infrastructure**. The humanitarian problems are inter-connected with infrastructure problems too. It's not only relating to 2020 War consequences, but they are also long-term problems that you know. We have recovered much infrastructure including roads, electricity, network and stations, water pipelines, gas pipelines, schools, kindergartens, hospitals etc. Still, we have some large detriments as a result of the War that we need to solve. We need to restore now. That's not enough. Again, we want to build Artsakh back better. We want to have better infrastructure conditions we had than before the War. We have many projects there both the government but also Armenian worldwide organizations and Armenian government supporting this.

The fifth one, which is again not only short-term, but long-term problem is institutional capacity. For sure, for solving the war consequences and problems, we need better institutional capacities. We are building them or improving them. That's not enough. This is the area where the Armenian world has, I would not say zero, but guite a small number of investments. Unfortunately, by now, we have not given enough attention to institutional capacities because the needs should be recorded, should be assessed by institutions. The needs should be satisfied by institutions. Many other things, both short-term and long-term, should be done by local institutions which means also individual and professional capacities. This is an area that I want to attract your attention to in order to invest here too because we are isolated the international community. We don't have the good experience of the international community of institutional building. We only have the experience of Armenia and Armenians worldwide. That's why, whoever has any kind of capacity, any kind of solution or any kind of proposal, we

are open to discuss such kind of investment in Artsakh too.

What qualities do we need in order to tackle both long-term and short-term problems? There are many qualities I'm thinking of. Again I separated five qualities. The first one is self-analysis, which is quite important for us at all levels: individual, group or organizational level, community level, and national level. Everyone, each group, each community, and our nation and the governments in Armenia and Artsakh, first should be able to analyze themselves, ourselves including myself. To understand our mistakes, to understand our successes, our weak and our strong parts, and then, we can analyze our environment including our neighbors. Unless we have good self-analysis, we can't reach our goals both short-term and long-term.

The second quality is unity. At least for national goals, we have to have unity everywhere. Debates, competitions are good, but antagonism is not acceptable especially when we are working on national goals, national dreams. That's a must for us.

Strategic thinking. We should understand that this situation is a complex situation, is a complicated one. It doesn't have an easy and short-term solution. We should have strategic thinking and patience in order to have one day, to see the results and the goals come true. **Persistence**, this a part of strategic thinking too because we need to be persistent in reaching our goals. We don't have the right to give up this way.

Service thinking, which is again, quite important personally for me too. Service thinking is a part of our life, national life, social life and everyone in each group; each community should be caring of other groups too. It doesn't mean that we should serve only to Artsakh people. We should serve the Homeland including Armenia people and Artsakh and Armenia people should serve to our diaspora compatriots too. This is a part of our unity.

What can we do? Another question that especially after the war, many Armenians and especially the diaspora are asking. I think we have many things to do. If we have the goal, if we have these qualities, we can find solutions. We can find channels, but I would stress some points.

Firstly, whatever we can do for Artsakh is the first one, living in Artsakh one day. It doesn't mean that at this moment, this decision should be made. It means that we should think of that. Second, we should work in or for Artsakh. This is a part of our service, which means that even in distance, we can serve Artsakh. Even in distance, we can have some works there. We can take some groups or some students, or some institutions in order to build capacities there, improve capacities there. This is also a great part of our service. The third one, doing business in Artsakh. By now, the overwhelming majority of our people, diaspora Armenians, make lots of charity programs in Artsakh. After the war too, some of them had done business in Artsakh. I think it's the time to think about business. Business. especially in Artsakh, is both investment in workplaces, but also capacity building, but also charity programs. Because you are keeping many families in that case. You have money not wasted, but circulated, which is guite important to have self-sufficient system. Fourth one, having charity programs, projects, and hard investments in infrastructure whatever has been done so far since 90's by Armenian diaspora. As I said, we have lots of infrastructure to restore and many of them to build yet. We still have this need, but I guess this should not be the only or even, the first priority for us. The fifth one, to have soft investment in Artsakh. It means again as I said, capacity building, education, both formal and nonformal education which is important for us. The results of which are not visible and sometimes are not predictable, but they are long term results. I can say this with my own experience both in Artsakh, but also abroad how I got education and how I returned there and what it meant, this education, for me and for my people there.

To sum up, I would like to tell a small story on my life. When I was four and half years old, my father was killed in a battle in 1993. I asked my mom, "Mom, where is father? When is he returning?" He said that, "Soon, I will come back." Gradually, when I was growing up, I understood that my father would not return, but I was proud of my father and of the sacrifice of my father. I was not only proud, but I was sure that I would do everything in order to value the sacrifice of my father and many other fathers. When I was six, I lost my eyesight as a result of a landmine explosion. My mom always was saying that when you are sixteen, your vision will be back. I forgot that during the school time. I got a good education at the school and I was persistent in order to be a good man, good citizen. But, when I was sixteen, my mother died. I remembered the promise of my mom that my vision would be back. My vision was not back, but I got additional vision in order to serve for sacrifices and deprivations of my parents for my Homeland, for my people. I got an education, I returned to Artsakh and I started to serve to my people at the government, then as Human Rights Ombudsman. You know what I did during the war? I did quite a small part of the job because we had more than 4,000 sacrifices. It was quite a small thing, whatever I did. Everyone is saying I am a hero, but I am not a hero. Heroes are our sacrifices, our victims that they sacrificed the best things in their life. In the end of the war, on the last days of the war, always I had a question in my mind; whether these sacrifices, and since 90's including my father's sacrifice were in vain?

On November 9, this question was the strongest question in my mind and I thought that I'm doing an empty thing; not necessary thing what I'm doing. We had November 9 and the end of war. On November 10, I visited the graves of my father and my mother. I promised there and I swore there not to ask this question anymore because questions are not for us, such kind of questions. I swore and I promised to do everything that nobody, including myself, never will think about this question. Our sacrifices are not in vain because as Jesus gave the life, as Jesus had sacrifices in order to save the humanity, in order to give chance to humanity to be survived. Our victims and our heroes gave their life in order to give us a chance to live for the goal that they gave their life and they sacrificed their life for the same goals. It means that we have only one thing; to live so that nothing, no sacrifice should not be in vain, and we should live for the same goals that which they gave their lives.

Thank you.

AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian's Message at AMAA's 102nd Annual Meeting Banquet

Good Evening Fresno,

We did it!

After a two-year aspiration and a few months of diligent planning, God blessed us with this gathering of the larger family of the AMAA from coast to coast and our esteemed guests from around the globe, in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley. Thank you, Fresno, land of the early mass Armenian migration to the United States, a land soaked with the sweet sweat of industrious peasants and labor who turned the land into gold and their progeny into a class of remarkable, noteworthy and world class citizenry. Today, on the tour we hailed The Daring Young Man William Saroyan, bowed to our national hero, Soghomon Tehlirian, and saluted our epic hero, David

For a long weekend, we enjoyed the warm hospitality of two amazing AMAA committees, Host and Banquet.

We salute the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church, its daring minister Rev. Nerses Balabanian, Co-Chairs Edward and Roseann Saliba, the Church Council and all cohorts who warmly welcomed us, spearheaded all arrangements and streamlined the effort.

This Banquet has been a challenge for our Banquet Co-Chairs who have been longing for it to happen since the Fall of 2019. After a long struggle with the pandemic, we are here enjoying this remarkable event, which, with the help of AMAA's devoted staff, almost singlehandedly was the product of one person, LindaKay Bedrosian Abdulian.



Thank you, John, and LindaKay. Thank you, every single member of the Committee. May God abundantly bless you.

Thank you, First Armenian Presbyterian Church and Badveli Greg Haroutunian for the warm, colorful and boundless spirit of love, care and attention, extending every imaginable door to door service. May God bless the Church and its ministry.

I salute and thank our globally dispersed staff and partners in the Mission who have traveled the Oceans to join us today.

I salute and thank the AMAA staff in Paramus, NJ, Glendale, CA, Yerevan and Artsakh who graciously stand behind the effort to advance every AMAA event, activity, service or program. While I usually appear on the stage, the behind-the-scenes talents are those who produce the treasures we enjoy. Thank you, staff.

I salute my wife Sona and all spouses, men and women whose un-wavered support and encouragement is what makes things happen. I salute and thank our esteemed guest, the honorable Artsakh Republic State Minister, Artak Beglaryan, who travelled thousands of miles to bring us inspiration, courage and fortitude from those historical highlands, where at different intervals of history, our forebears, were forced out, leaving their hearts behind.

I salute our new Ambassador of Armenia to the United States, Lilit Makunts, who travelled the width of the continent for one night to honor us with her presence this evening. Thank you, Ambassador Makunts.

We do not have to look far in history to realize how veracious Hovhannes Shiraz was describing the destiny of the collective life of our people when he authored

> Մենբ խաղաղ էինք մեր լեռների պէս Դուբ հողմերի պէս փչեցիբ վայրագ

We laid in peace on our majestic peaks While you ferociously blustered through

The scripture says, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed." 2 Corinthians 4:8-9

The way to avoid more blusters is to fortify our peaks with:

1) Faith – Faith will sustain us, and with faith we have the victory in sight as we continue to 'set the light on the hill' and 'raise it on a candlestick' against the most ferocious blusters.

- 2) Love In love, we offer the highest levels of spiritual and material sacrifice by building, developing, teaching and reaching out. These brick-and-mortar treats fortify our peaks.
- 3) Service Jesus said, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" and "whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant." As we emulate Christ our Lord, our mission is to serve our people around the globe and especially those on the peaks of Artsakh.

Perseverance is the fuel that will run the engine of Faith, Love and Service, something our guest of honor tonight has learned well in childhood and exercised to reach the peaks of service and thus greatness.

You get a taste of the legacy of Love, Faith and Service of which tonight I am thrilled to share two new examples.

- 1) The Manguikian family have graciously funded \$300,000 covering the cost of renovation of AMAA's new Kindergarten in Stepanakert, Artsakh. The new and expanded kindergarten will be named after Dr. BEDROS MANGUIKIAN. We are profoundly grateful to Dr. Dertad Manguikian for the love expressed to the children of Artsakh through this generous dona-
- 2) Sarkis and Haygouhi Maranjian have graciously pledged \$125,000 to the AMAA Shogh Center in Vanadzor, Armenia. The Center will be called SARKIS and HAYGOUHI MARANJIAN SHOGH CENTER. Dear Sarkis and Haygouhi Maranjian, generations of youth are being illuminated in the AMAA Shogh Centers in Armenia. Thank you for your gracious Christian spirit.

God has called on the AMAA to face the spiritual and humanitarian challenges of our people and assume a humble role of service. As we look up to the Great Commission, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation" Mark 16:15, the march

Thank you for sharing this evening with us. Thank you for your generous support and may God bless you all.

Ambassador of Armenia to the United States Lilit Makunts' Message at AMAA's 102nd Annual Meeting Banquet

t is an honor to be here with you - at the 102nd Annual Meeting Banquet of the Armenian Missionary Association of America and I would like to thank you for the kind invitation. It is my first visit to Fresno, and California, since I assumed the post of the Ambassador of Armenia to the United States and it has its symbolic meaning. Fresno has a special place in the hearts and minds of American Armenians, as one of the first places where our ancestors settled finding a refuge after fleeing persecution and the Genocide in the Ottoman Turkey more than a century ago. Also, we all know and love Fresno as a city where our prominent compatriot – William Saroyan, was born and lived. This factor makes it another privilege to be here tonight.

103 years ago, a group of believers met in Worcester, MA and founded the Armenian Missionary Association of America longing to assist their compatriots who suffered from the Armenian Genocide and found shelters worldwide. This invaluable assistance was a firm proof of our unity, a unity which comes through centuries.

For more than a century, the Armenian Missionary Association of America is standing next to the Armenians in need and through its daily activity in different fields - from spiritual to social, inspires people with a hope for a better life and future.



I want to acknowledge AMAA's tremendous aid after the devastating earthquake of 1988, during the first Artsakh war, throughout our independence and after the second Artsakh war. The immense humanitarian activity on the ground is beyond any words of

In any country, and especially for Armenia and Armenians, education plays a huge role in the development of the society, in the increase of the social-economic situation and overall, in strengthening the state as a whole. In this context I would like to extend our gratitude to our compatriots living abroad who invest in education, who support our young people who seek to get their education and then contribute to the development of our country. Dozens of kindergartens and schools in Armenia and Artsakh run by the AMAA are a good example of this. I would also like to highlight the educational centers operated by the AMAA in other countries with Armenian communities. This educational bridge is an important channel of keeping our Armenian identity worldwide. Our language and traditions are yet another key to preserving our culture, statehood and unity.

Today, a year after the 44-day Artsakh war, we might seem psychologically devastated, discouraged and lost. But we will recover and rise again.

Thank you!

A Reception in Honor of State Minister of Artsakh Artak Beglaryan at the Consulate General of Armenia in Los Angeles

special reception was held on Wednesday, October 27 at the Consulate General of Armenia in Los Angeles located in Glendale, CA in honor of the State Minister of Artsakh, Mr. Artak Beglaryan. The reception was organized and hosted jointly by the ROA Consulate and the Armenian Missionary Association of America.

The reception/program started with a prayer offered by Archbishop Pargev Martirosyan. Among the guests were dignitaries and representatives of different State and Local governmental agencies, who presented certificates of appreciation to Mr. Beglaryan. Special greetings were conveyed by Consul General Mr. Armen Baibourtian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian and Mr. Beglaryan's Personal Advisor Mr. David Akopyan. Mr. Beglaryan in his message thanked for the organizers for the honor be-



stowed upon him, presented the current situation in Artsakh and spoke about the challenges and priorities of the country. He stressed that Artsakh is Armenian and has always been and is part of the world civilization. Mr. Beglaryan invited the Armenian Diaspora communities not only do charity work in Artsakh but invest in the country in all fields. Below are the remarks AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian presented during the reception.

Dear Guests,

On behalf of the Armenian Missionary Association of America and its President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian, who is among us this evening, I welcome you to this reception honoring the State Minister of the Artsakh Republic, Mr. Artak Beglaryan. I am grateful to the Consulate General of the Republic of Armenia and Ambassador Baibourtian for the honor and opportunity to jointly organize and host this event.

October is a shining stellar on the Armenian calendar when we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Translators, the creation of the Armenian Alphabet and the translation of the Holy Bible. October denotes the genesis of Armenia's illumination and the threshold to civilization.

But October 2020 will remain a dark reminder of a barbaric assault by heinous beasts let loose in the Near East. Our hearts bleed as we remember a nation mourning the martyrdom of its youngest and brightest in defense of a Homeland and its sanctities.

It did not take long for this resilient people to stand up and build what evil hands destroyed, illuminate the darkness imposed and live, toil, sweat and create again.

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of being in Artsakh again, where despite the pain suffered from my cognitive realization of the consequences of war, my psyche interacted with the joy of watching an indigenous population return to their Homeland with a fervent spirit of ownership and an indestructible will to stay put at home.

This evening we are gathered to honor Artsakh through one of its finest children, the Honorable State Minister of Artsakh Republic, Artak Beglaryan.

Mr. Beglaryan is a fighter who has extensively struggled in life. Armed with faith and courage, he has persevered and conquered all obstacles to climb the ladder of greatness through humility, hard work and the Christian spirit of service. Mr. Beglaryan brings us inspiration, courage and fortitude from our historic highlands which remain wounded but upbeat and forward looking.

Since 1995, the AMAA has had a vast presence of goodwill in the Artsakh Republic in the fields of education, spiritual and social service, humanitarian assistance and youth services. AMAA has expanded its services in postwar Artsakh. Despite our significant material losses in occupied Shushi, the AMAA is not shy and will invest even more. Our return on investment is not measured in material values but in human values. Please join me in welcoming the distinguished State Minister of Artsakh and may we assure him of our perpetual commitment to the Republic and its people.

Let me close with a statement borrowed from our honorable guest. "If you care for Artsakh to remain Armenian or if you care for Armenians to remain in Artsakh then do something about it."

Thank you and please enjoy the evening.



AMAA Holds 102nd Annual Meeting in Fresno **Elects New Board Members for Class of 2024**

By Louisa Janbazian

he 102nd Annual Meeting of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) was held at the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church in Fresno, CA on Saturday, October 23, 2021.

AMAA President Nazareth Darakjian, M.D. presided over the meeting. Rev. Razmig Minassian, Executive Director of Camp AREV, offered a prayer and a short devotion. His devotional was based on 1 Thessalonians 1:1-3. Rev. Minassian focused on Paul's encouraging words to the Thessalonians about their work produced by faith, their labor promoted by love and their endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. He reminded all who gathered at the meeting that in faith we look back at what God has done in our life, that love is the mechanism in which we live by today, and that we are a people of hope. Without hope, we are doomed. But through Christ, we have hope for a better day.

During the meeting AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian presented his report covering the Association's activities during the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year. Reports were also received from the AMAA Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs, as well as Representatives of the Armenian Evangelical Unions, the Armenian Evangelical World Council and affiliated organizations presented their reports, shared their joys and concerns and praised God for another successful year despite restrictions due to the COVID pandemic.

During the Annual Meeting, Mr. Artak Beglaryan, State Minister of Republic of Artsakh, greeted the attendees and credited the Christian education he received at the AMAA Summer Camps in Artsakh he attended in his childhood as helping develop his service spirit. Mr. Beglaryan was in CA upon the invitation of the AMAA as Guest of Honor of its 102nd Annual Meeting and Keynote speaker at the Association's Banquet on Saturday evening.

The AMAA's general membership elected the following nine members to the Board of Directors Class of 2024 for a term of three years: Ronald Altoon, Lucienne Aynilian, Bryan Bedrosian, Rev. Dr. Avedis Boynerian, John Cherkezian, Christine Momjian, Roseann Saliba, Eileen Chopourian Stephey, Ed.D. and Aram Shemmassian, M.D.



The officers of the AMAA at the Annual Meeting -L to R: Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian, President Dr. Nazareth E. Darakjian, and Co-Recording Secretary Mark Kassabian, Esa.

In conjunction with the AMAA Annual Meeting, the AMAA Board of Directors and the Armenian Evangelical World Council held their meetings October 21-22.

On Sunday, October 24, members and guests joined the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church of Fresno for a special Worship Service jointly with the congregation of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno. Dr. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Syria, preached in Armenian. Rev. Selimian's message was based on Isaiah 54:1-4. "The message of this passage," he said, "is what the prophet would have said: Spread out your tent and let the curtains of your dwelling be stretched; lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes." He concluded his message reflecting on the current situation in Artsakh: "God has chosen us as co-workers and He encourages us to fill those ruined cities with people..."

Rev. Dr. Ron Tovmassian, Senior Pastor of the United Armenian Congregational Church of Los Angeles, preached in English. In his message he said "As believers we will not have a heart for those who need to know the Lord, unless we realize there is no difference between us and them in God's eyes... While churches are a comfortable



Rev Dr Ron Toymassian

place for believers to gather, those who do not know the Lord will be out of place in a worshipping community. We must not just sit back and hope they come to us, like Jesus we must go out and seek them where they are and share God's love with them. That is our mission as individuals, as churches and it is the mission of the AMAA consistently pursuing, to go out into the world and share the Light of God's salvation."

A special prayer was offered by Rev. L. Nishan Bakalian in memory of AMAA members and friends who made the transition from this life to Life Eternal during the past year. Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian officiated the installation of the members and



State Minister of Artsakh Artak Beglaryan at AMAA's 102nd Annual Meeting Worship Service.



Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian installs AMAA Board members and officers.



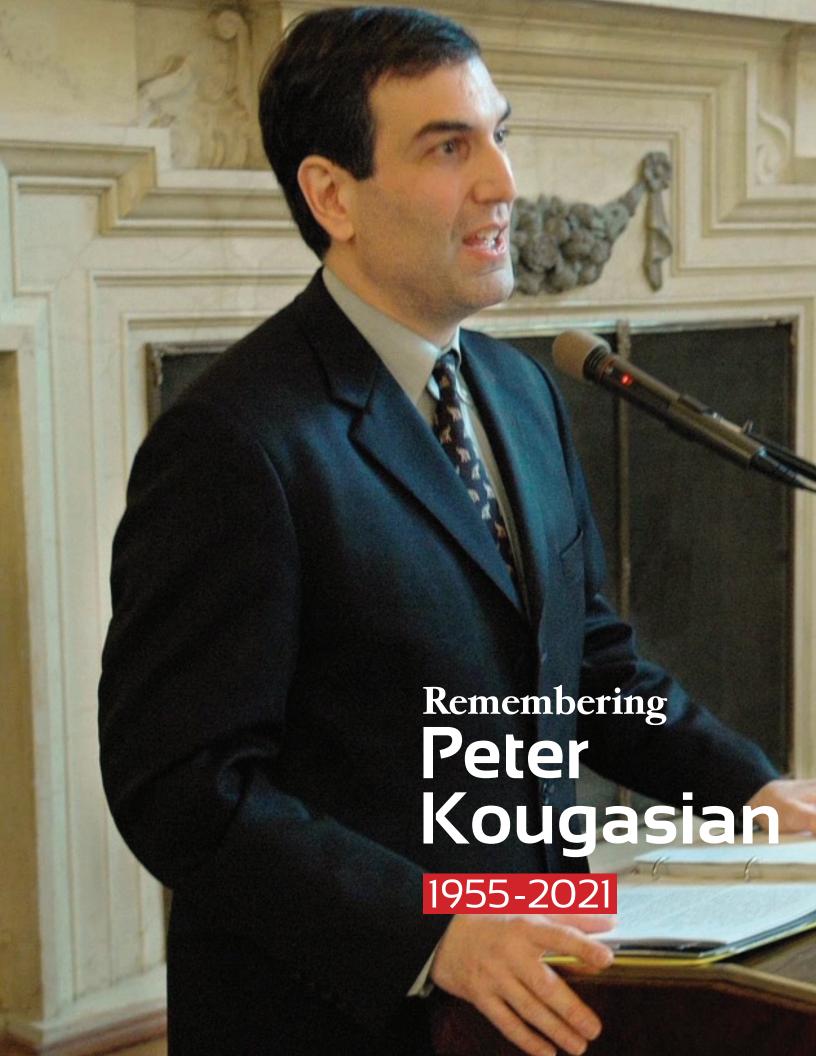
Rev Dr Haroutune Selimian



Rev. Nerses Balabanian.

"We take this opportunity to thank the members of the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church and its pastors, Senior Pastor Rev. Nerses Balabanian, Associate Pastor Rev. Kevin Kasper, and Annual Meeting and especially Host Committee Chairs Ed and Roseann Saliba for hosting the Annual Meeting and for welcoming us with great warmth, hospitality, delicious meals and enthusiasm. We pray that God will continue to bless this congregation and their ministry abundantly in the San Joaquin Valley," said Mr. Khanjian.

Prior to the AMAA's Annual Meeting, on Wednesday, October 20, representing the AMAA, Dr. Hasmig Baran accompanied the State Minister and the guests to pay cordial visits to Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church of North America at St. Leon Armenian Cathedral in Burbank, CA and Bishop Torkom Donoyan, Prelate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Orthodox Church of America at the Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church in La Crescenta. The following week, Mr. Khanjian accompanied the State Minister and paid cordial visits to the Consulate General of Armenia, St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Catholic Cathedral and the Headquarters of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America in Glendale, CA.





Peter Mark Kougasian, who won acclaim as an exemplary New York City prosecutor and adulation as a talented magician, died at age 66 on September 6, 2021 after waging a valiant five-year battle with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the Woodrow Wilson School of International Affairs at Princeton University, Peter earned his law degree at Yale Law School and began his career under Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau in 1979. Peter was inspired by a visit Mr. Morgenthau made to Yale, where he told the students that "victims of crime are disproportionately poor, minorities, and the disenfranchised," and that when violent crime has victimized an individual or a family, the prosecutor is often the only person who can provide compassion and a way to redress the damage. Peter's life could have taken many trajectories in the pursuit of fortune or fame. Instead, he became a compassionate public servant, a champion of the many victims he helped, and of the innumerable potential victims who were spared as a result of his diligent efforts.

After serving 17 years as a trial prosecutor under Mr. Morgenthau, Peter rose to the position of Senior Trial Attorney and served for several years as the Director of Legal Training, where he taught hundreds of new Assistant District Attorneys the fundamentals of courtroom practice and the responsibility to ensure justice in each case they prosecuted. In 2019, a year after Peter retired, the Manhattan D.A.'s Office named its litigation teaching facility after him. Engraved on the plague unveiled at the dedication ceremony on September 27, 2019, is the tribute: "In each position held during his 40 years as a prosecutor, Peter committed himself to justice, improving the institutions that he revered, and serving the city he loved." Peter's college and law school classmate and devoted friend and colleague at the Manhattan D.A.'s Office, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, spoke at the ceremony, describing Peter as "a man of integrity, honor, and valor." Chief Judge Robert Katzmann of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, praised Peter as "a friend for all seasons, a forever friend, a formidable public lawyer."

In 1996, Peter moved to the city-wide Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, eventually serving as Bureau Chief and Counsel to the Special Narcotics Prosecutor. Over the ensuing 22 years, during which Peter handled a wide variety of cases, he was the lead investigatory and trial attorney who obtained the landmark first conviction of a physician in New York State for the overdose deaths of his victims. The case, People v. Li, involved an anesthesiologist who overprescribed narcotics and sold prescriptions from a pain clinic in Queens. A six-month grand jury

presentation led to a 211-count indictment for recklessly prescribing lethal amounts of opioid medications for patients in exchange for cash. In July 2014, the 18-week trial resulted in the conviction of the physician for manslaughter in the overdose deaths of two patients and dozens of other charges, all of which were upheld by the New York Court of Appeals. In 2015, the New York City Bar Association awarded Peter the annual Thomas E. Dewey Medal for outstanding Assistant District Attorney in the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor.

A true public servant, Peter accepted the call to leadership of numerous bar association activities. He served as a member of the New York State Bar Association Task Force on Mandatory Retirement of Judges, and the Nominating Committee, and was a member of the House of Delegates, chairing the New York City Bar Association delegation.

As a thirty-five-year member of the New York City Bar Association, Peter chaired the Board of Directors (formerly known as the Executive Committee) and served as Vice President of the Association. He also chaired the Committee on the Judiciary and the Corrections and Community Reentry Committee, which issued a pioneering report in 1989 on HIV/AIDS in New York's prisons that was featured on the front page of the New York Times. Also under his leadership, the Legal Education and Admission to the Bar Committee authored a report, "Bridging the Gap," that helped to reform the New York bar exam, which, he believed, "over-tested in substantive practice areas, but under-tests in the skills required to be a lawyer." Peter also served on the Disability Law and Nominating Committees.

Peter was born on June 28, 1955 in Providence, Rhode Island. His mother, the late Betty Asadorian Kougasian, was a graduate of Pembroke College, which subsequently became part of Brown University. She was a classical Latin scholar, violinist, orchestral performer, concertmistress, music teacher, and one of the first Suzuki violin teachers in Rhode Island. His father, the late Peter Kougasian, a Columbia University graduate who also played the violin, was a successful photo engraver, costume jewelry manufacturer, and longtime member of the Cranston School Committee.

Peter was marked for academic distinction at an early age. He could recite the Gettysburg Address at age five, and astounded his kindergarten teacher by reading aloud a poster that she had brought to class. In high school, he was Captain of the Math Team, Treasurer of the National Honor Society, and Parliamentarian of the Debate Team. At Princeton, he was a member of the prestigious Whig-Clio Debating Society.

The scope of Peter's life extended far beyond his formidable professional achievements. He was deeply proud of his Armenian heritage, as the grandson of Armenian immigrants to the United States. He was a devoted member and Moderator of the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York. He served the Armenian Missionary Association of America as a Board Member beginning in 1996 and as Vice President and Chairman of the Armenia Committee. He was an ardent supporter of the Avedisian School in Yerevan, the Armenian capital city. Peter's Armenian roots created a special bond between him and Robert Morgenthau, whose grandfather had served as U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire at the time of the Armenian Genocide and who himself was a champion of the Armenian people.

To the wonder and delight of all who knew him, Peter was a skilled magician. He watched a magic trick by his father at age three, and started learning magic at age five. Peter performed tricks in junior high school and on through law school (where classmates would occasionally hear a "bing" when a coin hit the floor as it slipped from Peter's hand while he kept in shape by rolling it from finger to finger across his knuckles). A student of the legendary Slydini and inspired by other master magicians, Peter became a consummate sleight-of-hand performer. He appeared regularly for performances at prominent New York magic venues including The Magic Towne House on East 61st Street for six years in the 1980s, Mostly Magic in Greenwich Village, and the Monday Night Magic Show at the Bleecker Street Theatre. He was known as "The Amazin' Kougasian" and "Uncle Pete." In December of 2020, Peter was presented the inaugural Monday Night Magic Legends Award.

With a remarkable ability to ad lib, Peter was a master comedian who thrilled audiences with his performances, in which his magic and comedy intertwined. His magician friend David Regal recalls that "in the end, it was a bespoke performance of magic." Very often the audiences were amazed, not just because they were fooled by his magic effects, but because they were experiencing a performance that would never happen again. Peter would do his usual dazzling tricks, but his jokes were created on the spot based on current events and information elicited from audience volunteers.

Peter is survived by his wife Elizabeth (Beth) Edds Kougasian, Esq., who is Director of Major and Planned Gifts at Calvary Hospital, and his son, Alexander Edds Kougasian, who earned a B.A. in Philosophy from Brandeis University in 2021 and is currently employed



Peter Kougasian introduces Hon. Robert M. Morgenthau, Esq., former District Attorney of New York County, the keynote speaker at AMAA's 91st Annual Meeting Banquet, Oct. 17, 2010.



AMAA delegates visit the United States Embassy in Armenia at Baghramyan 18, currently the AMAA Headquarters in Armenia. Peter Kougasian standing second row left. (July 1996).



Peter and Elizabeth Kougasian (second row right) with some of AMAA Armenia Tour participants at Lake Sevan, Armenia (July 1996).



Peter Kougasian shows his magic tricks to the children at AMAA's Aghveran Camp in Armenia (July 1996).

as a video game designer for Riot Games. Also surviving Peter are his sister Jakki Horan of Chelmsford, MA, her husband Neal, and their children, Victoria, Corie, and Maggie; his brother-in-law John Warren Edds of Sarasota, FL, and his wife Nicole; and sister-in-law Ami Susan Petrucelli of Bethesda, MD, her husband Michael, and their children, Aiden, Bricen, and Coleson.



'One of the Most Resilient People I've Ever Met':

Peter Kougasian, Four-Decade Manhattan Prosecutor, Inspired with How He Lived

"I have never, ever known a human being to go through what he did without a sense of anger or pity for himself. It just wasn't in Peter's canon," U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor told Law.com. She had been close friends with Kougasian for 50 years.

By Jason Grant | November 05, 2021 NEW YORK LAW JOURNAL

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n November 2020, Peter Kougasian lay inside a nursing care facility as he had for many months, his body immobilized due to neurodegenerative disease, his mouth unable to form or speak words, his breathing done by a ventilator because of respiratory failure.

His mind remained keen, though. "Still working at 150%," recalled his wife, Beth.

A phone call came in that evening to his bedside in the East Harlem facility, and his room's line picked up. Kougasian, who was 65, could hear what was being said. But he could only communicate by using a speech-generating device called Tobii that tracked eye movement. He would fixate on a letter on a screen, and letter by letter he would build words, and word by word he would build sentences.

Two people were on the call that came in: Beth, and another person he knew well, named Karen Silas. For 30 years, Kougasian had stayed in touch with Silas. In 1995, as a senior prosecutor at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office—where he would carve out an admired 40-year career-Kougasian had convicted a man who'd murdered Silas' daughter, Nikki, and Nikki's thenroommate. The women, ages 20 and 19, had been found strangled inside their Harlem apartment. One lay floating in a bathtub, the other stretched across a bed. The apartment had been looted.

Silas had been wondering for several years now how Kougasian was doing. Year in and year out, she and Kougasian had always talked during the holidays. But the last time she'd gotten to speak with him, in 2016 or 2017, he had told her that he'd just been diagnosed with ALS, or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. And she knew when she hadn't heard from him since, "he must've been in a bad place."

She wanted to check on him, and she also had a question: She wanted to find out how she could write to Kevin Ladson, who was in prison and who was the murderer of her daughter.

About five years before, Silas, a devout Catholic, had met with Ladson at the Shawangunk Prison, after Kougasian had helped her set up a face-to-face meeting that she'd felt she needed to have. As Ladson cried that day and showed "remorse in his eyes," she forgave him for what he'd done. Now she needed to write to him to see how he had been, and what he had been accomplishing in prison, since they'd met.

Kougasian, in what those who knew him say was his perpetually kind and highspirited way, heard Silas' request, and began painstakingly fixating on the Tobii's screen. Unable to move even his eyebrows, he built sentences as fast as he could. He spelled out the name of Lucy Lang, who he'd worked with at the DA's Office. And he managed to suggest to Silas that she try to reach Lang at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, where Lang was working or had recently worked, because she could help Silas get a letter to Ladson.

"It was amazing, absolutely just amazing," said Silas now of Kougasian and the phone call. "But that was his being—always still fighting. And always, always positive."

On September 6, Kougasian died, after a long struggle with ALS. The help he gave that day to Silas, during the latter stages of a disease that ravaged nearly everything in his life, was just one example of how committed he was to others and to being "of service," as both a man and prosecutor, say those who knew him well.

In the late stages of ALS, his own view of his life was this: "I am a progressively erased version of what I was. My mission is to let people see, not a deficiency to be pitied, but an affirmative existence that can yet provoke and entertain and even inspire reflection."

In long and sometimes effusive comments given in recent interviews, many of those who knew Kougasian said that he has left behind a mark that is hard to encapsulate, given its reach and its depth. Part of his mark, they said, is the many roles he filled in his life—a husband, a father, an assistant district attorney who also helped lead New York City's special narcotics prosecutorial office, a teacher of young prosecutors, a philosopher, a writer of speeches, argument and fiction, a faith-based man who contributed to his Armenian American church and community, a professional magician, a comedian, a city bar leader, and the list goes on.

But more than that, they said, his greatest legacy, in the end, is the kind of friend, colleague and family man he was. He had a courageous and genuine way of touching people, they said, that helped make their

lives better. He was relentlessly supportive in talking to people going through difficulties; he offered kind and unexpected acts; he was a prolific writer of letters who exchanged thoughts with people from across the world whom he'd never met; and he found other ways to reach people still.

And then, in a last chapter that those closest to him say became his most inspiring, Kougasian, who died at 66, took on ALS with a triumphal spirit that seemed hard to conjure up, but that appeared daily before their eyes.

"He was one of the most resilient people I've ever met," said Cyrus Vance, the district attorney of Manhattan, who knew Kougasian for decades and who grew close to him after he was elected DA in 2009.

ALS "took a toll on his ability to work day to day, but he never complained," said Vance. "And even in his last months, I was emailing Peter and he was always upbeat and curious, all the while in a hospital bed, while silent and in a hospital bed."

"Even then, he wanted to write remarks for me, and he did," said Vance, referring to one of Kougasian's unofficial roles in the office for years: Writing speeches and public remarks for Vance, and before that, for former Manhattan DA Robert Morgenthau, as both men were called upon to speak across New York and elsewhere.

And the remarks Kougasian stitched together on his Tobii machine "were what all his remarks were," Vance said. "Always eloquent and touching on some important theme, whether it was justice or tragedy."

In a separate recent interview with Law. com, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who met Kougasian in 1972 when they were both Princeton University undergraduates, said of her friend, with whom she stayed connected for 50 years, "He didn't fight ALS. Yes, he did a lot of research and ... talking to scientists about how best to treat his condition, and regrettably there wasn't much he could do to find a cure."

But "he learned to live with it," as part of who he became, she said.

"He understood that he could grow and even do more through his example" of facing ALS and still engaging in life fully, "and he lived the rest of his life doing just that," she said.

"He mentored people and spoke to them about the use of his writing device with his eyes," said Sotomayor, who spoke for 35 minutes for this story. And "he was in correspondence [with] so many different kinds of people."



Peter Kougasian stands in the middle of fellow awardees after receiving the 2015 Thomas E. Dewey Medal. From left to right: Robert Morgenthau, Edward Saslaw, Karen Varriale, Peter Kougasian, Martha Bashford, Mark Feldman and Donald Levin. Back row: Debra Raskin and Thomas Curran. (Courtesy Photo)

"These were things that Peter did not as a sense of obligation, but as a sense of contribution to living," she said. "I have never, ever known a human being to go through what he did without a sense of anger or pity for himself. It just wasn't in Peter's canon."

A 'Calling' to Be a Prosecutor

As the story goes, when Kougasian was in law school at Yale University in the midto-late 1970s, he thought about becoming a defense attorney. Then one day at Yale, Morgenthau, the revered Manhattan district attorney who would ultimately hold the position for 34 years, came to campus to both speak and find recruits.

As Morgenthau addressed students that day, an incredulous law student stood and asked him how he could spend his days putting people in jail. Morgenthau didn't respond angrily. Instead, he explained to the student that being a prosecutor meant serving victims of crime, who mostly are from disadvantaged and poorer circumstances, and that a prosecutor was sometimes the only person who could give victims a measure of justice and a way to move forward with their lives.

According to family and friends of Kougasian, Morgenthau's answer, and especially the measured and calm way in which he delivered it, impressed Kougasian so much that he decided he wanted to join Morgenthau's team.

A couple of years later, in 1979, Kougasian, along with Sotomayor, who like Kougasian went to Yale—the two friends even studied for the bar together-joined Morgenthau's office as young assistant district attorneys.

Today, both Beth Kougasian and Vance say the role of being a prosecutor in the Manhattan office soon became what Peter Kougasian saw as a calling. He later would have opportunities to leave the job and make more money. But he was drawn to the high-stakes cases. And more than that, say Beth Kougasian and Vance, he was drawn to the opportunities prosecutors have to shape social justice issues and public policy through the way in which they handle criti-

"The idea of setting social policy through criminal justice was an incredible pull for him," said Beth, his wife of 31 years. "You are not championing" an alleged perpetrator or a victim over the other, she said, but "you are really able to provide social justice and a measure of equity through prosecution."

John Feerick, the former longtime dean of Fordham University law school and a former New York City Bar Association president, grew to know Peter and Beth Kougasian well, over several decades. He said of Peter Kougasian's commitment to the prosecutorial role, "He knew that a lot

of people who are not rich face challenges when they deal with the law. He was sensitive to that—how you dealt with them, and their cases. The law wasn't just there for the rich, he would say, the law was there for the poor, to be applied fairly."

Near the end of her interview comments, Sotomayor said, "We need more people involved in the law that had Peter's sense of its importance in the lives of others."

"To remain a devoted practitioner for your entire career, it's a hard job," she said, "and yet Peter loved his work with the same devotion that he started with."

"It's a pity we don't have more people who come to the practice of law and their professions of the same devotion, or the sense that they should look for a way of life that continues the kind of passion that they went into it with."

"He is a life lesson," she said. "He was making a difference and felt he was. ... There wasn't anything better that he could do."

Kougasian's Big Case

People interviewed about Kougasian's work as a 40-year DA point to several big trials and cases he won. But perhaps no victory will have more lasting impact, several said,

than his jury-trial win in 2014 in Queens. It was then that Kougasian convicted a physician of manslaughter, rather than of a lesser offense, for peddling opiate and other prescriptions to drug abusers for cash.

The case was what was known colloquially as a "pill mill" case. And in New York state, it was believed no other physician had been previously charged with homicide for recklessly writing opiate prescriptions to addicted patients who died.

But in the case of Dr. Stan Xuhui Li, who ran a revolving-door clinic on weekends in Flushing, Queens, meeting with up to 80 patients in a day, two of his patients were found dead within a few days of seeing him. And pill bottles were found near their bodies, according to prosecutors and news reports.

Kougasian, then a special assistant district attorney assigned to the city's Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor, which had jurisdiction over high-level drug cases across the five boroughs, was a lead prosecutor handling closing arguments, according to The New York Times.

During those arguments, he zeroed in on the death of Joseph Haeg, one of Li's drug-addled patients, and he pushed the manslaughter theory by telling jurors, "The tragic ending of this life was entirely foreseeable. Dr. Li had the evidence in front of his eyes," according to The Times account.

A week later, the jury, which deliberated for six days, found Li guilty of more than 195 counts, including two for second-degree manslaughter, six for reckless endangerment, and dozens more for criminal sale of a prescription for a controlled substance, which before Li's case was the charge nearly always used for physicians who'd recklessly prescribed drugs.

"That case was a big deal," said Vance.
"It was what I consider a landmark." It featured "an untested theory of prosecution."

Mentoring ADAs

While trial work and taking on weighty cases was meaningful to Kougasian, there were other aspects of his DA's Office work that were equally, if not more, important to him, according to Beth.

One of those was training and mentoring young prosecutors.

He relished the mentoring role, in all its forms, she said. And from 1986 to 1990, he served as the DA's Office's director of legal training, a position that allowed him to maximize his love for teaching.

Peter Kougasian's Roles at the Manhattan DA and Office of Special Narcotics Prosecutor From 1979 to Dec. 2018

- Aug. 13, 1979ADA IN TRIAL BUREAU
- Feb. 4, 1986DIRECTOR OF LEGAL TRAINING
- April 2, 1990SR. TRIAL COUNSEL IN TRIAL BUREAU
- June 9, 1996BUREAU CHIEF IN SNP
- Sept. 1, 2011
 SPECIAL ASSISTANT DA IN SNP EXECUTIVE
 MANAGEMENT CENTRAL
- Feb. 1, 2016
 COUNSEL TO THE SNP IN EXECUTIVE
 MANAGEMENT CENTRAL
- July 3, 2016 to Dec. 24, 2018
 EXECUTIVE ADA AND COUNSEL TO THE SPECIAL NARCOTICS PROSECUTOR IN SNP EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT CENTRAL

Positions Peter Kougasian held at NYC Bar Association A City Bar member for 35 years

- Chair of the Board of Directors (formerly known as the Executive Committee)
- Vice President of the New York City Bar Association



Manhattan DA Office at One Hogan Place

The post was seen as vital inside the office—a high-energy and incessantly busy prosecutorial hub in the heart of America's largest city, where new and eager assistant district attorneys arrived in droves.

Beth Kougasian, who is a lawyer herself, remembers her late husband's zeal for teaching this way: "The idea of nurturing and shaping young legal minds, and assisting them to their fulfillment, and their potential, was something that was very meaningful to him."

She also noted that he was a "career prosecutor who wore many hats for many years," and so he was "constantly teaching and mentoring" younger ADAs.

In Sotomayor's interview about Kougasian, she remembered fondly seeing her friend's trial-lawyering skills in the 1980s, when they were fresh-faced ADAs, and she connected those abilities to his later teaching.

In particular, she talked about how Kougasian's skills as a performer—he would eventually perform magic and comedy shows at regular bookings throughout New York City for decades—buttressed his abilities in the court.

"Performance skills in the work we do" as lawyers, "we tend to think of them as somehow not genuine, that they minimize the seriousness of the work we do," she said. Peter "understood that performance skills really assist you in communicating with people."

"If you listen[ed] carefully to him" in the court, "you understood that there were serious messages being transmitted in interesting ways," she said. "But each had a very central purpose and value they were communicating, and that is really critical, for example, in convincing juries who don't want to do what you'd like them to do."

"No one ever doubted how genuine he was when presenting a case to the jury," said Sotomayor, "but his humor let them sort of understand things without feeling threatened."

"The same was true in his teaching. I mean he kept people involved in the messages he was trying to get through, with his humor."

Vance, too, keenly remembered Kougasian's nurturing of less experienced ADAs. And he said Kougasian ultimately helped to train "hundreds and thousands" of them.

Then he grew quieter, and more reflective, as he recalled that in 2019 the Manhattan District Attorney's Office decided to rename its prosecutorial training area the "Peter M. Kougasian Training Center."

The renaming, he said, was highlighted by a dedication ceremony in September of that year, which Kougasian attended remotely from a hospital bed.

He was "very impaired and fragilelooking," recalled Vance, when he appeared on a screen at the ceremony, but it was a "comforting and emotional moment" for him. And soon Sotomayor spoke by video, he said, and Robert Katzman, then the chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, spoke live at the dedication.

And then as part of the day, a plaque was unveiled that would be bolted to the wall of the center.

"In each position held during his 40 years as a prosecutor," the plaque said, "Peter committed himself to justice, improving the institution that he revered, and serving the city he loved. He taught us the practice of law through his brilliance of words, kindness of heart, inventive humor, and a touch of magic."

Kougasian as Renaissance and Family Man

Kougasian fulfilled his calling to be a prosecutor who espoused and promoted social justice. But those who knew him well, also knew that even his demanding ADA career was not enough to satiate what Vance called his "enormously broad range of interests."

To Beth, who was closest to him—they married in 1991—he exemplified a "Renaissance Man" because of his wide-ranging curiosities and seemingly nonstop desire to learn.

"He would pursue all kinds of intellectual and artistic experiences," she said. "He was someone who started taking graduateschool philosophy classes in the 1980s" at Columbia University, she pointed out, while still a relatively young ADA, "just because he wanted to philosophize, and because he wanted to have a high-level discourse in a structured environment."

"He used to joke with me that he was in the eighth year of a 2-year program," she said.

Later, in an email titled "Peter Kougasian and Proust" that she sent after a phone interview, she wrote, "Peter was an avid Francophile [who] visited Paris 12 times and read French literature with a particular interest in the life and works of Marcel Proust."

"His family indulged his desire to trek around France tracing the author's footsteps," she said, from Proust's "aunt's house in Illiers-Combray" to "The Grand Hotel in Cabourg immortalized in his novel," "Remembrance of Things Past, Vol. 2: Within A Budding Grove," to the "Pere Lachaise Cemetery where [Kougasian] encountered like-minded fanatics having a picnic on Proust's grave!"

"Peter loved French music, art, language, food and cinema, but not necessarily in that order," she wrote.

Asked during the interview how he was able to juggle so many varied interests, she said that "he had tremendous energy and drive, and discipline."

She also noted that there was "a balance," in her view, between his decades of magic performances, which were always laced with comedy, and his work as a lawyer.

"There is an intellectual quality when you're doing topical humor" as he did, she said. "He had an incredible skill for ad-libbing."



Peter Kougasian performing magic on the Monday Night Magic Stage. (Courtesy Photo)

"He was able to craft these amazing experiences, using people's backgrounds from the audience, and fitting them into current events, and then finding commonalities among all of them" that were funny.

"In same way when you're managing a trial," she said, "you have thousands of exhibits, and different points you are trying to make. And there's an intensity to it.

"He was very good at being able to process information, and manage complicated ideas."

Still, while working full time and feeding his plethora of interests, he always made time for family, she said-for their child, Alex.

"He was an incredibly devoted father," she said, and then she launched into the story of how he took up violin again as an adult—after playing it seriously for years in his youth and then dropping it fully-once Alex began to study it as a boy.

Just as Peter Kougasian's mother, a violin teacher, had done for him decades before, he suddenly joined with Alex in the Suzuki method, in which parent and child practice together and take lessons together each week, so that the child can learn the complicated instrument in a fully supportive environment.

Then in the years that followed, as Alex was invited as a youngster and teenager to play each year at an orchestral music festival in Italy, the family took the trip together seven or eight times, said Beth Kougasian.

"Peter would play next to Alex at the festival," and Beth Kougasian, who before becoming a lawyer had been an actress and a singer, would sing alongside them.

The Last Stages of His Life

In around 2014, Peter Kougasian began experiencing physical symptoms that he and Beth would later learn were attributable to the early stages of ALS. In his usual highenergy way, he kept pushing through life, she said, even as he would sometimes have episodes of intense teeth-chattering or difficulty swallowing. He was not diagnosed with the disease until about two years later.

ALS is known to progress through the body from either the "bottom up" or the "top down," taking one core function and ability from a person after the next, said Beth Kougasian, who learned about the disease while caring for her husband.

In Peter Kougasian's case, it infiltrated him from the top down, such that he lost the ability to make facial movements and speak before losing the movement of limbs and functions in his chest and torso, and then in his lower body.

As he became bedridden in his later years of life, more than one person whom he saw or corresponded with, said Beth, would kindly, but with sadness in their voice, say that it seemed "unfair" that Kougasian, an incredibly glib and thoughtful man, "was now rendered speechless and bed-bound."

In his own gentle but direct way, he would always reply, said Beth: "I had a beautiful life. I have a beautiful life. It's not, 'Why me?' It's, 'Why not me?'"

"He never, never felt sorry for himself," said Beth Kougasian. "And he never cursed God for his fate. It was his faith in God that allowed him to endure his fate."

Eventually his fate, she said, would force him to go through both a tracheostomy to his neck area and being connected to a ventilator, because his lungs failed him.

"A lot of people with his disease are not willing to endure" a tracheostomy and a ventilator, she then said. They decide not to. "But Peter always chose life. ... He was all about staying in the moment, and being present with, and for, people."

Vance spoke about the triumphal and loving nature of his good friend, both before and during his final years.

"Peter was loving," he said. "Not in a give-you-a-big-hug way. But he was genuinely able to share his affection as a friend without reservation."

"He was someone you wanted to be around. He was someone who would uplift you when you felt down," said Vance, "and he was someone who in his later years with ALS who would inspire you because of his resilience ... and his dedication to friends."

The DA also chuckled a few times, as he recalled some of the emails he got from Kougasian during the last year or so of his life.

At one point, he sent an email just after he was able to come off of a breathing tube.

"I am now breathing on my own, with surprising facility," he wrote. "As I told my nurse, 'You'd think I've been doing this all mv life.'"

Karen Silas, the mother of the young woman, Nikki, who was strangled to death in 1992, talked in a phone interview about how during the four-week trial of Ladson, Kougasian was a lifeline for her.

"I just felt very connected to him," she said. "He kept me posted before the trial ever started. He called me frequently."

And eventually, she said, she decided she wanted to stay in touch with him through the years, "because he became a part of my life."

"I just felt it was very important," she said, to stay connected with him. "It gave me more strength to realize how interested he was in her, Nikki, and in us as a family. We weren't forgotten."

"I always think about what a kind and gentle man he was," she said.

In His Own Words

A couple of months before he died, Kougasian wrote an essay on his Tobii device for people who, like him, could no longer speak without the aid of a machine, and for the community of caregivers to the incapacitated. He sent it to a group called Bridging Voice, which helps people with neurodegenerative diseases access technology. The organization plans to share it at various caregiving centers and post it on its website.

In the essay, Kougasian speaks about some of the triumphs the technology had allowed him, and also about some of the frustration and pain that had come when the advanced-but-imperfect technology invariably "crashed," or just stopped working, until someone happened to notice and reset it.

"Separated from my tobii eye gaze computer, I am largely helpless," he wrote. "I use the machine as a nurse call bell. I use it to speak. I use it to text and email. ... Without it, I speak only to God."

"When my device is not working, I have no alternative but to wait, sometimes for hours, for someone to enter my room for an unrelated reason, and try to summon their attention," he also wrote in the piece. And "this I do by trying to make eye contact, and then darting my eyes to the screen repeatedly.

"But sometimes the caregiver does not make eye contact," he explained. "And I am resigned to wait some more."

But when the device does come alive. he said, after someone has realized it crashed and has adjusted it, "the magic can begin."

"I have resolved," he said, "to make at least one person laugh hard every day. And believe it or not, that's easier to do using the machine, because it is so unexpected.

"The unsuspecting visitor to my room finds an essentially paralyzed man with a fixed expression.

"The visitor murmurs something innocuous like, his hair is shorter. Suddenly, a disembodied voice replies, 'I'm gorgeous!' And in that instant, it seems like Voltaire never died."

IN HIS OWN WORDS

Peter Kougasian's Essay written on his Tobii

very day of my life, once an hour, from eleven in the morning until after midnight, I get a text. The message is from a friend who is a clinical psychologist in British Columbia, and it always asks the same thing: are you okay? My friend knows if she doesn't get an answer that I am somehow separated from my eye gaze recognition computer, or that it has crashed.



And that in turn means that I am likely alone in my room in the nursing facility, unable, due to ALS, to communicate with anyone or summon help. And so, if her text goes unanswered for too long, my Canadian friend calls my wife Beth, and Beth calls the nursing station and asks them to send someone to my room.

Because separated from my Tobii eye gaze computer, I am largely helpless. I use the machine as a nurse call bell. I use it to speak. I use it to text and email. I use it to access the internet. I use it to operate the television in my room. Without it, I speak only to God.

Recently, a nurse said something that startled me. She had just finished caring for me, and before she left, she asked, would you like me to adjust your screen?

And why did this startle me?

Like any very advanced technology, the Tobii can be intimidating.

For most people, the conventional wisdom is, don't touch it so you don't make it worse. This is human nature and completely understandable. But it also means most people never acquire the skills for even the simplest of interventions.

And so, we have given some thought to how to guide people how to help me if they happen upon me in a mute condition. We taped detailed instructions to the back of the screen, but no one ever thinks of looking there. So a therapist put a sign on the wall saying, there are instructions taped to the screen - but no one read the sign.

When my device is not working, I have no alternative but to wait, sometimes for hours, for someone to enter my room for an unrelated reason, and try to summon their attention. This I do by trying to make eye contact, and then darting my eyes to the screen repeatedly.

But sometimes the caregiver does not make eye contact. They enter, take my blood pressure, and leave. And I am resigned to wait some more.

The problems generally fall into two categories. Either the device is out of alignment with my eyes, or it has crashed.

The eye gaze technology is truly amazing, but it depends on a very delicate connection between my eyes and the screen. If they are even slightly out of alignment, communication is difficult or impossible.

It is very hard, just by looking at my face and the screen, for the inexperienced to align them successfully.

So there is displayed on the screen a small Track Status gauge, a dark square that represents the screen, and two white dots showing where my eyes align within it.

But there is a knack even to using the Track Status gauge, and often the caregiver will ask me, What do you want me to do, when it is precisely my difficulty communicating that we are trying to address.

If, on the other hand, the problem is that the machine has crashed, the only solution is to reboot. Step one, taped to the back of my machine, is to turn it off by holding down the power button for ten seconds.

And here I have learned something about human nature. Tell someone to hold a button down for ten seconds, and odds are they will hold it down for maybe four. The machine does not reboot, and the caregiver is perplexed.

I even composed my own instructions that read, "ten full seconds. Nine seconds is not long enough," but it made little

If everything is working, though, the magic can begin. I have resolved to make at least one person laugh hard every day. And believe it or not, that's easier to do using the machine, because it is so unexpected.

The unsuspecting visitor to my room finds an essentially paralyzed man with a fixed expression.

The visitor murmurs something innocuous like, his hair is shorter. Suddenly, a disembodied voice replies, I'm gorgeous! And in that instant, it seems like Voltaire never died.



Dr. Shelly O'Connor, Registered Psychologist, is the friend of 35 years Peter referenced in the opening paragraph of his essay. From the time Peter was admitted to the Henry J. Carter Specialty Hospital and Skilled Nursing Facility up to and including the day he died, Shelly wore many hats, sharing with him her diverse talents and training both in person and remotely: medical researcher, technology assistant, scribe for novel edits, psychologist, cheerleader, pod cast "engineer" and hands-on caregiver. In short, she was a guardian angel!



Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, Sonia Sotomayor, reflects on the life of Peter Kougasian during the Memorial Service.

Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States Sonia Sotomayor Reflects on the Life of Peter Kougasian at the Memorial Service Held at the Armenian Evangelical Church of NY, **September 25, 2021**

n 2013, I did a radio interview with Nina Totenberg of National Public Radio. Peter heard it and sent me a note informing me that he once shook the hand of Nina's father, Roman Totenberg, a virtuoso violinist, and that when he followed-up by sending Roman a letter, the two struck up a friendly written correspondence that lasted for years. In fact, I understand that Peter maintained friendly written correspondences with many people worldwide. Most had never met him, but one at least came to see him while he was at the Carter Center. That post-interview note from Peter introduced me to yet another

emphasizes the importance of a good learning environment and parental support. In college he shifted his focus back to his childhood fascination with magic. But Peter picked up the violin again when his son Alex began to study music. Peter was brilliant in so many ways. He epitomized the Renaissance man. He was a lawyer, a philosopher, a scholar, an educator, a performer, and a prolific reader and writer. He was also one of the wittiest men in the world.

Today, others will speak more extensively about all the varied aspects of Peter's life. I will speak of the extraordinarily honest, loving and brave man he was. I first met Peter in college at Princeton in 1972. Because magic was not same trial bureau. That our paths would overlap for twelve years so identically is truly improbable. But I am forever grateful that they did.

In all our time together, there were two characteristics that Peter constantly demonstrated: honesty and kindness. I have never known a more honest person. Peter never bent the rules. He would question and poke fun at the rules. But he always followed them. He was an Assistant DA of the highest integrity. To him, justice meant always doing everything the right way. Whether he was at home, in his church, on professional committees, or at work, Peter was a man of principle and service.

Peter also cared deeply about everyone he befriended. He was the first to congratulate you when something good transpired. And the first to comfort you in times of hardship. He would often ask probing questions, but in the gentlest way possible. Peter also saw the contradictions and oddities in life. He would poke kind fun at his friend's quirks. His jokes were hilarious and quick-witted. Yet he happily accepted all the vagrancies and idiosyncrasies of his friends. He never let the bad in the world overwhelm his immense enthusiasm for the best in people. He pushed you to be the best version of yourself because that is what he made you see through his eyes. What a unique talent. Everything Peter did or said came from a place of love, joy, and kindness.

Before I reflect more on Peter, I want to talk about the two most important people in Peter's life: his wife Beth and



He never let the bad in the world overwhelm his immense enthusiasm for the best in people. He pushed you to be the best version of yourself because that is what he made you see through his eyes.



facet of my extraordinarily brilliant friend.

Despite knowing Peter for so many years, I had no idea he was a connoisseur of music, let alone a musician himself. In high school, Peter studied the violin with his mother in the Suzuki method, which going to pay the bills, we then followed each other to Yale Law School. There, we were placed in the same first-year small group. From there, we both headed to the New York County District Attorney's Office, where we were assigned to the his son Alex. Whenever Peter spoke about Alex, you could see in his eyes the pride he took in his son. That Alex chose his studies in philosophy based on his father's influence is a glowing reflection of the incredible bond the two share. Alex, your care and attention to your dad during the long days and nights at the Carter Center is a tribute to just how much like him you are. As you go down life's path and choose your own profession, you can rest assured that, no matter what, you have your father's unfaltering respect and admiration. He had every reason to be proud of you.

I know that some of you, but not all, know the story of how Peter and Beth met. It is also a story about how much they shared. Well over two decades ago, Beth went to a career day at Fordham Law School. Peter was there as a representative of the Manhattan DA's Office. Peter was trying to drum up enthusiasm for his office and make connections with students so he was in a full "I-Love-New-York" mode. At that point, he explained: "Isn't it so fantastic how many celebrities there are here. Who is the most famous person you've seen?"

Beth, who had worked in television, relayed the most New York moment she had ever had. She described how she had once met Howard Cosell-a blustery New York sports anchor—in a network makeup room. Beth sat next to Howard, watching him in the mirror, with his famed toupee off, leaning back, having his nose hairs trimmed. Beth's telling of the encounter was so quintessentially Peter that it was love at first sight. Peter later told his friends that he knew that very moment that this was the woman he would marry.

I will not fill in the details of how many times Beth turned away Peter's requests for a second date after their first. Suffice it to say, she was busy and focused on family responsibilities at the time. Peter at one point said he would give her space and call her back in the Spring. But he could not wait that long. He called her on the first sunny day and she finally relented. She began that date by conveying to him all the reasons she could not become involved with anyone at that time. But the evening ended with them talking about wedding plans. This was a perfect pair. They enjoyed so many things together and brought out the best

in each other. When Peter introduced me to Beth, he glowed.

Most spouses support their partners unconditionally. Thankfully, few are called upon to give as much as Beth gave to Peter these last five years. She was always vigilant and knew when to exert pressure over medical professionals to do the right thing and tend to Peter's needs. Peter rightly described himself as a blessed man. Beth, your love for Peter is a glowing example of giving.

No one could imagine the full depth of Peter's character until watching him cope with ALS. He never let his diagnosis diminish the interest he took in family and friends. What struck me most, though, was Peter's persistently positive attitude. He was never angry at what had befallen him. He saw his condition as an opportunity to see and be in the world in a different way, and applied his usual ingenuity to find solutions for his needs. For example, a year ago he drafted a poignant letter to share at the portrait unveiling of our mutual friend, Bob Katzmann, using only his eyes to type. It must have taken Peter days to write with his eyes, but he did it with great humor and patience.

tape, and invited us to express ourselves in images. And then we were asked to talk about what we had produced.

And I was surprised and saddened that the emotions expressed by my dear colleagues were overwhelmingly despairing and even bitter. One fellow, arguably not as bad off as I, produced a work that declared in enormous letters, HELL ON EARTH. And it struck me that while thus far ALS has certainly been annoying, that is not how I experience the disease at all.

So, I started typing furiously in my text-to-voice app, and the group leader said, 'I think Peter has something he wants to say.' I hit play:

'one thought that has come to mind as we have shared everyone's art today. last week beth and I went to a modern art exhibit and saw a famous work by Rauschenberg in which he painstakingly erased other artists drawing. [ALS] can feel like that, where everything we have worked so hard to accomplish is being erased. but it is also true that seeing the erased paper can fill the viewer with awe. I think if we approach our diminishing abilities with dignity, we might still be able to inspire others, maybe even more than when we were healthy.'



He never let his diagnosis diminish the interest he took in family and friends... He saw his condition as an opportunity to see and be in the world in a different way, and applied his usual ingenuity to find solutions for his needs.



I want to end with Peter's own words. They illustrate him and his life, both with and without ALS, better than anything I can think of. Peter had, through an encounter with a friend, become an admirer of the modern artist Rauschenberg. In an email he sent me in June 2018, he wrote of attending his monthly ALS support group meeting a few days after going to a Rauschenberg exhibit:

"As fate would have it, the program for the month was art therapy. The art therapist supplied paper and marking pens and glossy magazines and scissors and

So that's how I sometimes think of myself, and my changing place in the world. I am a progressively erased version of what I was. My mission is to let people see, not a deficiency to be pitied, but an affirmative existence that can yet provoke and entertain and even inspire reflection. 'That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses.'"

We delighted in you Peter, before and even more after your erasure. You inspired us all. Your fight made the world a better place. We will miss you. The world needs more Peters.



Alex Kougasian delivers the Euology at his father's Memorial Service.

Alex Kougasian's Eulogy at his father's **Peter Kougasian's Memorial Service** held at the Armenian Evangelical Church of NY, September 25, 2021

efore I begin, my family and I want to thank Pastor Haig Kherlopian, his wife Nancy, and the volunteers who helped put this wonderful ceremony together. We would like to thank Dr. Jean-Paul Belistri and Dr. Eugene MacFearson for their extraordinary approach to finding medical solutions for my

father. We want to thank Cheryl Hampton Mckenith, Rosemarie Hiatt and all the therapists and caretakers who nursed and cared for my father on a daily basis over the past few years. We give thanks to everyone from Henry J. Carter Hospital for giving my father the



vital attention that kept him in our lives for so long. We'd also like to thank everyone who visited my father and all my father's friends at the Manhattan DA's office, but especially Joel Seidemann, John Freid and Justice Sonia Sotomayor who went above and beyond.

To be honest, if I were to name all the phenomenal

people who have supported my father and my family through difficult times, my voice would give out. But I want to give one special thank you to my mom whom my father lovingly called "hereshdag," Armenian for angel. My mother's love and dedication to my dad brought him hope and comfort in moments where solace was near impossible to find. I love you, mom.

I will now share some remarks about my father.

In the novel *The Plague* by Albert Camus, there is a character named Grand who is afflicted with insatiable perfectionism. He's a writer who slaves over every aspect of a book he has always dreamed of writing. In a conversation with the protagonist, Grand presents the culmination of his feverish efforts and excitedly reads what he has written. Surprisingly, though, all that he has managed to complete is a draft of the opening line. The line reads: "One fine morning in the month of May an elegant young horsewoman might have been seen riding a handsome sorrel mare along the flowery avenues of the Bois de Boulogne."

The line is well-written, pleasant, and intriguing. However, Grand insists that he has much more work to do on that one sentence alone. "Once I've succeeded in rendering perfectly the picture in my mind's eye," he says, "once my words have the exact tempo of this ride, the horse is trotting, one-two-three, one-twothree [...] the rest will come more easily."



Father and son Kougasian in front of a portrait of Peter's favorite French author, Marcel Proust in Musee d'Orsay in Paris (2000 and 2015).



Three generations of Kougasians: Peter Sr., Alex and Peter Mark, July 2000 in Pelham Manor, NY.

Remembering this short exchange would always make me think of my dad. He was not a perfectionist to the tortured extent that Grand seems to be, but he was a perfectionist in his own right. He once explained to me that his writing process generally consisted of constant rereading and laborious iteration.

More recently, though, I was reminded of this moment in The Plague for a different reason. As I was writing and rewriting these remarks, I noticed that I, myself, was beginning to feel a little like Grand.

- How do you say something meaningful about someone whose relationship with words created the most meaningful parts of your life?
- How do you show your adoration for someone whose devotion to you transcended his ability to walk, speak, and blink?
- How do you depict the influence of someone whose example you seek to follow diligently for the rest of your life?

My father's impact on me seems so fundamental, so atomic, that it feels as if I am less influenced by him than I am constituted by him. And, thus, I found it unreasonably difficult to measure the things about him that made him special to me. No list will ever be complete.

Even among the aspects of my dad that I know were profoundly important to me, many seem to contradict each other:

- His words filled up the volume of a room, and yet he was the most thoughtful listener I have ever known.
- His witty remarks and gentle insight portrayed an underlying confidence that was clear to everyone around him. Nonetheless, my father showed a humility that was omnipresent and deeply perceptible.
- At every age, my dad was wise beyond his years. But somehow that brilliance didn't betray his silly side which he would often brandish like a weapon against his unsuspecting family.
- My father's dignified sense of justice rested on unwavering and thoroughly reasoned principles. Yet his capacity for forgiveness was equal parts inspiring and difficult to imitate.

He was a curious believer, a selfless pleasure-seeker, a leading servant- the oxymorons are endless.

But you get the idea, my dad was wonderful on both ends of opposing axes. He set a resplendently paradoxical example for me and everyone else who looked up to him.

I hope this emphasizes my father's irreplaceability; but more importantly, I hope it speaks to how valuable the time we got with him was. My dad had his own breed of benevolence. The positive impact he had on me, on all of you, and on countless others around the world will outlive him.

I will close with this: When I was in high school, my father told me a somber story about his experience at the Manhattan DA's office in the aftermath of September 11th. The chaos brought everything to a halt. Every member of his trial bureau was stunned at the atrocity that had just occurred. The event ate away at the prosecutors' convictions. Those who had sworn to protect the City of New York were forced to sit helplessly as civilian life became unlivable in Lower Manhattan.

My father attempted to console the other ADAs and himself, with what he interpreted to be the main theme and lesson from



The newlyweds, Mr. & Mrs. Peter and Elizabeth Kougasian, July 20, 1990.



Peter and Beth Kougasian in Jerusalem, Israel (1994).

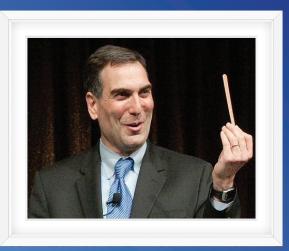


Elizabeth and Peter Kougasian with Justice Sonia Sotomayor at Brooklyn Law School, April 18, 2016.

one of his favorite books, The Plague. It's a sentiment that proves timeless as all of us mournfully reflect on my father's legacy.

When we as people are forced to confront the absurdity of meaningless suffering and the emptiness that accompanies tragic loss, those of us who dedicate ourselves to helping others will miraculously find purpose.

Thank you.



The recent passing of Peter Mark Kougasian, Esq., AMAA VP has deeply affected all of us at the Armenian Missionary Association of America. The following are a number of reflections on Peter from some of the members of the AMAA Board of Directors.

"Much has been said about Peter Kougasian and his brilliant career, forsaking the big buck's payoff and always looking to help the have-nots. What few may know is the leading role he played on the Avedisian **School Construction** Committee. Our Committee met several times with the United Nations Representatives and when questions were directed to me as Committee chair, I would always respond by referring the questions to Peter saying he could best answer them. At one meeting one of the representatives was the second leading candidate for Secretary General of the UN. As usual, I asked Peter to respond to her questions and Peter's great skills as a communicator and orator immediately came to light. She sat straight up and listened with great interest as Peter brilliantly responded with great care, respect, and information

that as usual carried the day for Avedisian School.

The UN response over time led to a large grant for our School and a UN paid invite to visit the new European Headquarters of the UN Building under construction in Copenhagen. While I never knew that Peter performed magic shows, I now see in retrospect how he performed using those same communication skills for the benefit of the socio and economically challenged students at our School. What a gift for all those who experienced his extraordinary talents. For sure we are all the better for it. Many thanks, Peter, for all you did and how you did it. "

Edward Avedisian

"Peter Kougasian touched me, inspired me and challenged me with his Christian life unlike anyone I have known. Peter always had a joy that was pure. A

real Christian joy. Peter had patience and humility. Peter had a natural concern and love for others, especially his family. Peter had a courageous heart and an extraordinary positive spirit. When he would speak, you could hear the goodness of his spirit strong and clear. Later, when he was no longer able to speak except by machine, you could still hear the goodness of his spirit, in some ways even more strongly, even more clearly. I never said to Peter how much I admired him. I wish I did. He continues to inspire me as a Christian life to be emulated.

'... That is how we know we are living in him. Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did.' (1 John 2: 5-6, NLT)"

John Cherkezian

"Having served on the Board of the AMAA on and off for almost 30 years, I have enjoyed the privilege

of meeting many people from all walks of life from all over the country. That's where I met Peter, a ray of sunshine in a relatively long and dull meeting. It was amazing how Peter could make his point and convince people to change their positions without hurting anyone's feelings. His life very much circled around his wife Beth and his son Alex. Despite his very busy schedule he would find the time to take Alex to his violin lessons. Having learned the lesson himself he would then go home and continue to teach Alex. He was a big fan of the sacred music concerts that the Lark musical society produced and would never miss a performance. He was kind, gentle, very humble but very smart and witty. His positive outlook on life even when he was totally paralyzed was beyond human understanding. May God bless his memory." Nazareth E. Darakjian, M.D.

"Brilliant minds are not born every day, nor are people with great faith, devotion and courage. Peter Mark Kougasian was a brilliant person of faith, who courageously devoted his entire life serving mankind as the husband to his beloved Beth, the adoring father to Alex, a prosecutor seeking justice for victims of crimes, a member of the AMAA Board and Vice President guiding it through many turbulent issues and times. Beyond a brilliant mind, what characterized Peter was his devotion to the Lord through service to mankind.

It was indeed my privilege to work with Peter on the AMAA Board and its committees for many years, and I got to know him and Beth as well in many social gatherings that followed the Board meetings. His clarity of thought, always expressed with that characteristic precision, as well as humor, enriched those meetings and gatherings for us. I am grateful to the AMAA for introducing me to Peter, whose life of faithfulness and devotion was exemplary to me and others who knew him.

While I am comforted by the belief that he is waiting for us somewhere near, and one day we will again see Peter in the presence of our Lord, I personally miss him, feel his void, and mourn him. I am grateful for his life and having known him in person. May he Rest in Peace."

Nurhan Helvacian, Ph.D.

"I had the privilege of being Peter Kougasian's pastor for eight years. He always told me that one of the greatest things he ever did was to serve on the AMAA Board. He also had a deep love for the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York and was a pillar of the community serving as the Moderator for many years. Whenever I met with Peter, the first question he would always ask me was, "how is the Church treating you?" He would always want to know how I was doing and how the Church was doing so he knew how to pray for us while he was battling ALS from the hospital bed. Peter was a man of great character. He never played the victim card or asked the why me question, but Peter kept his integrity, kept his humor, and kept his faith in our Lord Christ Jesus to the very end."

Rev. Dr. Haig Kherlopian

"When I think about Peter, the following words come to mind: kindness, integrity and brilliance. I recall first meeting Peter a little over 10 years ago. He was speaking at an AMAA event in Northern New Jersey. I could immediately tell he was very special. His public speaking skills were extraordinary. Over the years, I learned more and more about Peter, my fellow AMAA Board member and fellow member of the Bar. Yes, Peter's credentials were impeccable: Princeton University, Yale Law School, and distinguished career as a trial lawyer and mentor to junior attorneys in the Manhattan District

Attorney's Office. Despite all his accomplishments, though, I learned quickly that Peter was extremely humble, a dedicated servant to Armenian causes, and a family man. Like so many others, I am fortunate to have crossed paths with Peter. "It's magic you know; never believe it's not so."

Thomas Momjian, Esq.

"I first met Peter,

Beth and Alex Kougasian in the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York in 2006. Peter and I bonded quickly over philosophy, as well as our shared family roots in Harpert. He was king of the coffee hour, holding court discursively in a way no one else could—with his signature combination of grace, intelligence, humor, Francophilia, open-heartedness, and goodwill. It was Peter who brought me into the AMAA, encouraging me to run for the Board. Beginning in 2016, I had the privilege of serving with him on it for a short time. Peter prayed for me this summer (2021) as I sought to become the bridge pastor at Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church in Havertown, PA. I feel a great deal of pain in Peter's absence, but one source of particularly acute disappointment for me is my own inadequacy to represent him well in words. Who but Peter himself has the rhetorical genius for a task like that?"

Heather Ohaneson, Ph.D.

"Peter Kougasian was that rare gentleman whom God touched in a unique

way; the quintessential intellect and scholar, virtuoso musician joyously performing with his equally gifted son Alex;

Master of magic, 25 years' ago Camp Aghveran (a former Soviet retreat in Armenia), mesmerizing threadbare children with his sleight of hand illusions. Peter tasted the fullness of life. He was a profound soul; lover of the Lord. Joyous, even in those days of painful battle. Peter won a glorious graduation, reaching the best Heaven could provide in His eternal home."

Joe and Joyce Stein

"Peter was one of the special ones. In any setting, he was quiet, but a presence. I count it a blessing to have known and worked with Peter. We knew each other as members of the **AMAA Board of Directors** from the early 1990s to 2015. During that period there were several changes in the leadership and on the Board requiring a cool head and a high level of tolerance for different opinions and change. At Board meetings, Peter's participation was always pertinent—there were no wasted words or time when he spoke. And he was always a conciliator, which at critical points was especially important. I last saw Peter at the AMAA Banquet and **Annual Meeting in Paramus** in 2017 where we each made brief presentations. He was a clear and thoughtful speaker who most always had something interesting and important to say."

Joe Zeronian, Ed.D.





THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 12, 2021

The Kougasian Family New Rochelle, New York

To the Kougasian Family,

Jill and I are sending you our heartfelt condolences on the passing of your beloved Peter. I know there are few words I can share that will ease the pain of losing a loved one. Your entire family is in my thoughts and prayers.

Though the grieving process never quite ends, I promise you the day will come when the memory of Peter will bring a smile to your lips before it brings a tear to your eye. My prayer for your family is that this day comes sooner rather than later.

Sincerely,





September 25, 2021

Dear Beth and Alex,

On behalf of the Board and staff of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), we bring Dear Friends of the Kougasian family, you our deepest and heartfelt condolences on the passing of AMAA Vice President, Board Member, Armenia Committee Chair, Peter Kougasian. As a husband, father and career professional, he leaves a legacy of love and

Ever since my wife and I moved to the East Coast to assume my duties with the AMAA, we had the blessing service that is outstanding, unmatched and unique. of coming to know numerous remarkable individuals, be they within the AMAA family or without.

Since Peter was elected to serve on the AMAA Board of Directors in the 1990s, his prominence was wide-

Like the shining Northern Star and with the speed of lightening, Peter was discovered, admired and loved by all who came to interact with him. Armenian Evangelical institutions on the West Coast grabbed every opportunity to invite Peter as their keynote speaker to banquets, anniversaries or community celebrations. spread.

Like many others, Sona and I came to know Peter at one of these events and the bond was Gordian. Peter was a multi-talented human being. His love of music, magic and ministry, in addition to a stellar pro-

fessional practice at the New York District Attorney's office placed him on a different plateau. Peter's practice of magic was not limited to the profession. His spirit, faith and unfathomable whit galvanized his listeners who were quick to realize in him a man who was above the ordinary. Never missed to bring

I thank God for the several occasions, coordinated with Elizabeth, when we visited him at the hospital where humor into the subject or spice an email with his keen cognitive witty wisdom. he lay physically incapacitated. ALS is a vicious disease that brutally strikes its victims. The human mind has difficulty in understanding how a man, totally conscious of his condition would tolerate such emotional pain. But Peter's greatness in that condition, anchored on his faith, was demonstrated in his magical spirit that would rise

to console and uplift the visitors who had come to wish him well but were paralyzed with silence.

Peter's services to the AMAA, AEUNA and the New York Armenian Evangelical Church are invaluable. For many years he chaired AMAA's Armenia Committee. He visited his ancestral home Armenia, where with utter humility, Peter felt more blessed with the good AMAA carried than those who were on the receiving side.

The beautiful soul that he is, this Kharpertsi will for long be missed while he enjoys the Lord's presence. It is our prayer that you will find peace and that your heart will be uplifted as you hold on to God's promise,

"Peace I leave unto you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful" John 14:27. May you find solace in the splendid memories we all delightfully cher-

Prayerfully,

Zaven Khanjian Executive Director/CEO





By Philip Tavlian*

he First Armenian Presbyterian Church (FAPC) of Fresno was the first Armenian Church organized in the State of

In the early 1880s, natives of Marsovan and Trebizond migrated to Central California and formed a vibrant community. By 1892, the women of the Community founded the Armenian Ladies' Patriotic Society, an organization to "support orphans, ministers, and evangelists in Armenia."

Rejected by the American churches, 40 Armenian immigrants met in the upper room of Nicholls' Hall in Downtown Fresno on July 25, 1897 and organized the First Armenian Presbyterian Church. The congregation joined the family of Presbyterian churches on October 20, 1897.

Rev. Avedis Vartanian, Khachig Michaelian, and Hagop Azhderian were elected as the first Ruling Elders. The Rev. Lysander Tower Burbank, a retired missionary to Bitlis, preached the first sermon in the Armenian language and was unanimously elected as the charter pastor of the Church.

Rev. Burbank served FAPC for two years and was succeeded by Rev. George Haroutune Filian, a native of Antioch and a graduate of Chicago Theological Seminary. During his three-year ministry, a church building was constructed at the corner of Santa Clara and Fulton Streets. This was the steepled, octagon sanctuary that authors William Saroyan and A.I. Bezzerides attended in their youth.





Rev. Gregory Haroutunian, Senior Pastor of FAPC.

Upon Rev. Filian's resignation, Dr. Caspar Mallarian, a graduate of Wheaton College and Cornell University, served as pulpit supply. Rev. John Baptist Haygooni, M.D., a Baptist minister educated at New York University and Rochester Theological Seminary, became pastor on January 1, 1905 and served until October 1911.

Rev. Mgrdich Hagop Knadjian, a graduate of Central Turkey College at Aintab and Edinburgh Seminary, followed Rev. Haygooni. Rev. Knadjian resigned in 1922 and was succeeded by Rev. Doctor



Garabed Manoog Missirian, a graduate of Central Turkey College at Aintab, Harvard University, and Andover Divinity School. A beloved pastor, Dr. Missirian died from a ruptured appendix after serving a mere three years. Following his death, Rev. Misak Aijian supplied the pulpit for nearly a year.

Rev. Vartan Bedros Amirkhanian was then invited to the ministry of FAPC from the Armenian Presbyterian Church of New Jersey. A Genocide survivor, Rev. Amirkhanian was a graduate of Euphrates College of Harpoot, the Marash Theological Seminary, and did postgraduate work at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut.

During Rev. Amirkhanian's 17-year ministry, a bequest from charter member Haroutune "Harry" Arakelian challenged the congregation to build a new house of worship. The congregation relocated to a new, Spanish-style sanctuary at First Street and Huntington Boulevard. Shortly after the dedication of the Church, Rev. Amirkhanian retired and was named Pastor Emeritus.

The Church next called Rev. Arsham Khachadoor Yeramian to its pulpit. He ministered to the Church throughout World War II, when more than 100 young men and women from the Church family served in the U.S. armed forces.

Rev. Yeramian resigned in 1954 and was succeeded by Rev. Theodore Yacoub Daghlian. Plans for building expansion were initiated during his ministry. Rev. Daghlian resigned in 1962 and for two years the Church was served by pulpit supplies.

In 1964, the Rev. Vartkes Manuel Kassouni was called to the Church from the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York City. During his 12-year ministry, the Church pursued its expansion program and constructed a new Christian Education Building and Sanctuary. In 1977, Rev. Kassouni accepted a call to serve as Senior Pastor of the United Armenian Congregational Church of Los Angeles. Associate Pastor Theodore D. Lyons, Jr., son and nephew of distinguished Armenian Evangelical pastors, led the congregation for the next year.

On December 10, 1978, Rev. Bernard Asadoor Guekguezian was installed as tenth pastor of FAPC. With the assistance of Associate Pastors David C. Hammelmann and Gregory V. Haroutunian, he retired in January 2001, after presiding over construction of a new Fellowship Hall and celebration of the Congregation's Centennial. In the autumn of 2002 the title of "Pastor Emeritus" was conferred upon Rev. Guekguezian.

Rev. Doctor Lee Allison Hicks and Rev. Louis Robert Paradise served as Interim Senior Pastors until June 1, 2003, when the congregation called Rev. Mgrdich Melkonian as its 11th Senior Pastor. Rev. Melkonian resigned in May 2012 to become Pastor to the Pastors of the Evangelical Churches of Armenia in the Homeland and Artsakh.

On November 1, 2012, Rev. Paul R. Irwin, veteran Presbyterian Pastor and onetime professional musician, became Interim Senior Pastor of FAPC. On, September 15, 2013, the communicant membership of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno, California elected Rev. Gregory Vahack Haroutunian of Belmont, Massachusetts as the 12th Senior Pastor of the congregation in the heartland of the Golden State.

His tenure at FAPC has been marked by an emphasis on prayer and discipleship, with the theme of the Congregation being, "Love God. Love Others. Make Disciples."

Under Badveli Haroutunian's servant leadership, the congregation vigorously pursues a host of Gospel ministries, including Sunday School classes for youth and adults, regular Bible studies for the Armenian-speaking Women, Men, College & Career ages, and small group studies, the Gathering Women's Fellowship, Mommy & Me weekly meetings for young mothers, Praise Band, 24/7 Prayer Program, monthly ministry to residents of the California Armenian Home, and a comprehensive youth program round out the outreach of the Church.

Through the decades, facilities have changed, clergy and laity have arrived and departed, and cycles of immigration have ebbed and flowed. Yet the mission and ministry of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church remain the same – to be a witness for the Good News of Jesus Christ at home and abroad from generation unto generation.

* **Philip Taylian** is a member of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno, CA.



Original church - Built at 515 Fulton Street, at the corner of Santa Clara, and dedicated on April 2, 1901. Said church edifice sold to St. Paul Armenian Church.



Sanctuary of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno, CA.



By Rev. Calvin Sagherian*

n 2016, I was invited to Adana, Turkey, to discuss the potential for reconciliation with formerly Muslim Turkish pastors who had come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit had convicted them to seek reconciliation with Armenians in order to lift the curse they believe rests over the nation and the land, as a result of what their fathers had done in order to be a witness for Christ. Two years earlier, I had met several of these pastors and was eager to continue an honest dialogue with them. Seeking God's will, I reread my grandfather Rev. Sisag Manoogian's biography, 'Out of the Ark,' written by my aunt Rhoda Carswell. I wondered if I might be able to visit where he was born (Kaiseri) and where he served as a pastor (Adana).

What intrigued me most was a "goodbye letter" he had written to a missionary friend of his, assuming that they would never see each other again on earth. He was being deported and, eventually, would be killed. I was amazed at my grandfather's resolve to be a faithful witness to his Lord Jesus Christ both in life and in death. You can sense his deep sorrow for the suffering of his Armenian brothers and sisters at the hands of the Turks. Yet, he prayed for everyone, both Armenians and Turks.

Excerpts from the letter were included in the report commissioned by the British Government and presented to Parliament, known later as Lord Bryce's Blue Book: "The Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire." The portion printed in the "Blue Book" is prefaced: "Words of a Young Preacher."

On September 8, 1915, Adil Bey, Chief of the Secret Police, had ordered Rev. Sisag Manoogian to be ready to leave the following day with his mother, wife and his six-month-old son, Peter. Rev. Manoogian told his wife to pack what few things could be carried and to include a towel. He felt certain Peter would die on the way and he wanted to be able to bury his body, rather than just abandon it as so many had been forced to do.

Rev. and Mrs. Manoogian then dedicated Peter to God with the promise that if he lived, they would do their best to see that he worked as a missionary among Muslims. Not only did Peter survive, he went on to serve among Muslims as a physician in Deir el-Zor in the early 1940s.

'Words of a Young Preacher' - from the Blue Book

"We now understand that it is a great miracle that our nation has lived so many years amongst such a nation as this. From this we realize that God can and has shut the mouths of lions for many years. May God restrain them! I'm afraid they mean to kill some of us, cast some of us into most cruel starvation and send the rest out of this country... But be sure that, by God's special help, I will do my best to encourage others to die in a manly way. I will also look for God's help for myself to die as a Christian.

May this country see that if we cannot live here as men, we shall die as men of God. May God forgive this nation all their sins which they do without knowing. May the Armenians teach Jesus' life by their death, which they could not teach by their life. It is my great desire to see a Reverend Ali or Osman or Mohammed. May Jesus soon see many Turkish Christians as the fruit of His blood. May the war soon end, in order to save the Muslims from their cruelty, for they increase in that from day to day and from their ingrained habit of torturing others. Therefore, we are waiting on God, for the sake of the Muslims, as well as of the Armenians. May He appear soon!"

I was flabbergasted! Not only did my grandfather have a tender heart toward those who wished to kill him and his family, but now, one hundred years later, I had met the very people my grandfather had named and prayed for a hundred years ago, when he was being marched to his death! By God's grace he had the courage to pray for a miracle, for genuine repentance. And now, I was blessed to witness the answer to his prayer. I had just met "Reverend Ali," as well as "Reverend Mohammed" two years earlier! I'm still looking for Reverend Osman!

Was this simple coincidence or God's providence? God had heard the prayer of a faithful servant seeking to obey Jesus' teaching (Matthew 5:44) to pray for those who persecute you. And He answered it a century later!

We all struggle with Jesus' teaching to pray for our enemies who persecute, torture, maim and kill us. We struggle because we have experienced the agony of losing loved ones among our own families, even if it happened over one hundred years ago. The pain is still real. We struggle even more in 2021 with the wounds of the Artsakh war still fresh in our minds and hearts.

Could Jesus have meant these words for others, but not for us? He Himself experienced false accusations, an illegal trial, unjust torture and a cruel execution at the hands of evil men, while He was totally innocent. And yet, from the cross He uttered these, oh, so difficult words, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Jesus taught us to love our enemies and forgive those who sin against us, just as God has forgiven us our sins against Him (Matthew 6:12, 14-15). We wrongly assume that forgiving means we forgo the demand for justice. No, nurturing an unforgiving spirit is like drinking poison, hoping it will kill the person we are unwilling to forgive.

Forgiveness frees us from the shackles of bitterness poisoning our souls. God is very much aware of the pain and suffering of our people and He cares. He enables us to be faithful to His Word as we too pray—not that He would send our enemies to Hell-but that by His grace-which neither Turks nor we deserve—we would each seek true forgiveness, found only through the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ.



* Rev. Calvin Sagherian is the Moderator of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America and the Senior Pastor of the Calvary Armenian Congregational Church, San Francisco, CA.

Rev. Hendrik Shanazarian Named Interim Minister to the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America

n a recent Communiqué, the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America (AEUNA) announced that Rev. Hendrik Shanazarian assumed his post as Interim Minister to the Union of the AEUNA on October 1, 2021. He was unanimously confirmed by vote of the AEUNA Board of Directors in June 2021 and will be officially presented as the candidate to the AEUNA General Assembly for approval as Minister to the Union during the next General Assembly in June 2022.

Also at the September 24, 2021, Board of Directors' meeting, Rev. Calvin Sagherian was unanimously appointed as Acting Moderator of the AEUNA, and Rev. Serop Megerditchian was unanimously appointed as Acting Vice Moderator. Both pastors will serve in these roles until the end of the regular 2022 term.

As Moderator for the Union, Rev. Shanazarian was instrumental in assisting the Minister to the Union with ecclesiastical and community efforts. He served until recently as Associate Pastor at United Armenian Congregational Church, Los Angeles.

Born in Tehran, Rev. Shanazarian was ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in November 2000 in the Evangelical (Presbyterian) Church of Iran. He holds a B.A. in Clinical Psychology from the Allameh Tabatabaie University in Tehran, Iran, and M.Div. from the Near East School of Theology in Beirut, Lebanon. Rev. Shanazarian is married to Dr. Mariet Mikaelian and they have two children, Anna and Tadeh.

In 1981, he started his ministry in the Armenian Evangelical Church in Tehran as a youth leader and has served in different capacities since then. Before coming to the United States in 2007, he served on the leadership of the Evangelical (Presbyterian) Church in Iran, and taught Old Testament, Systematic Theology, and Christian Counseling and Worship at the Synod's Bible School.

Rev. Shanazarian was elected Moderator of the AEUNA at the General Assembly 2020 meeting held virtually and was instrumental in assisting with ecclesiastical and community projects.

A Year Later, What Hope?

By Rev. René Léonian, Ph.D.*

The sacrifice of our soldiers will not be in vain as of our Lord Jesus Christ who sacrificed His life on the Cross for our salvation.

Ver the past year, I have had the opportunity to return to Armenia and Artsakh several times. In reality, I don't know if Armenia and Artsakh need me, but I need them. I need to walk on the soil of our Homeland, need to meditate there, need to listen, feel, understand. All this is done in a spirit of sharing but also in silence.

I remember my first tourist trip to Armenia in 1981. It was like a dream. I was amazed by the landscapes, monasteries, museums, inscriptions in Armenian and so much more.

I was also a little surprised by the regime of the time. Of course, it was not Cilicia where my grandparents came from, but it was still part of a 3,000-year-old Armenia. In 1987 and 1992, I was able to visit Cilicia and Western Armenia. I probably had more emotion, but also a lot of sadness and anger when I saw the lamentable state of our ancestral heritage.

In 1994, I had the privilege of being appointed Representative of the Armenian Evangelical World Council in Armenia and Artsakh. I didn't know then that I was going to stay in Armenia with my wife Sylvie for 17 years. I can state that those years were among the most interesting and fruitful of my life. In addition to my pastoral responsibility for the churches, I led the humanitarian actions of two organizations, the Armenian Missionary Association of America and Hope for Armenia of France.

Today, a year later, how can we reconcile with the crushing defeat of the October 2020 war? How can we look in the eyes of the families of fallen soldiers, soldiers wounded for life? How will we explain to the new generations the fiasco in which Armenia and the global diaspora find themselves today?

I would have liked to have a magic wand to prevent this last war and its disastrous consequences. I would have liked our leaders to have acted with greater foresight, discernment and wisdom for 30 years. I would so much have liked civil society to totally fulfill its responsibilities so as to be a real counterweight. I would have liked the diaspora to be more and more involved.

We have all tried to analyze what happened to us, without necessarily finding the right answers to our questions.

Like each of you, I have my opinions on our leaders and their skills and incompetence. Far be it from me to scrutinize the actions of those who have governed Armenia and Artsakh since the early 1990s. Sooner or later, everyone will be held accountable for what they have done or should have done.

Naively, I tell myself that if the ruling power is able to answer the essential questions of Armenia and Artsakh, let it continue its action. Otherwise, let him think about giving way to others.

My point is not to point at anyone. It is, on the contrary, to consider avenues where we can all come forth with our heads held high.

In the coming days, I will be in Armenia and Artsakh again. I would like to convey a word of encouragement and comfort to our compatriots and their families. Especially to families devastated by the loss of a loved one, of their homes, villages, property or jobs. A very special thought for our wounded and prisoners of war.

I know that, despite your extreme pain, you are strong and that you will come through this atrocious ordeal. I know that, despite the sluggish support of the state and the diaspora, you are determined to move forward, persevere and get by.

More than ever, with you, we will work for more unity among our people, more solidarity, more determination to find the right solutions to problems, both big and small. Together, we will prove that nothing is insurmountable, and that our strength can even move mountains.

We cannot forget the blood that was shed during this last war. That's why we will succeed in our joint projects.

We are convinced that Armenia will strengthen its sovereignty and that Artsakh will return to its historical borders in a free and independent state.

Let us not forget either that we are a people who have accepted the Christian faith for a very long time. In the image of our Lord Jesus Christ who sacrificed His life on the Cross for our salvation, let us believe that the sacrifice of our soldiers will not be in vain. And, as Christ rose on the 3rd day, let us believe in the resurrection of our people, our nation, our state, our Armenia, our Artsakh.

People of Armenia, people of Artsakh, we love you, we are by your side, we will get by and we will triumph.

Views expressed in this article are those of the author.



*Rev. René Léonian is the President of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in Eurasia.

Armenian Evangelical Union of North America Yesterday and Today

History at a Glance



Compiled, translated and summarized by Rev. Hendrik Shanazarian*

Introduction

We just celebrated the Thanksgiving Holiday here in the United States. This was a great opportunity to remember God's blessings and faithfulness, especially in 2021, a special year for Armenian Evangelicals. We owe thanks to God for His providence and guidance over the years. The year 2021 coincides with the 175th Anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical Church, and the 50th Anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America. This is a great occasion to study our history, to recognize the highs and the lows, the successes and the failures; a time to refocus our eyes on our Lord and rely on His wisdom and strength and follow His lead, and to be renewed in

our faith and revitalized in our mission of Preaching His Gospel and serving Him, our community and our neighbors, glorifying His name in whatever we do and speak.

In this article, I will focus on the formation of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America and its current structure. For recent articles on the history and ministry of the Armenian Evangelical Church, I refer readers to the AEUNA Fall 2021 FORUM. and the 2021 AMAA News issue featuring the 175th Anniversary.

The Beginning

Armenian Evangelical churches have been present in the U.S. since the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Due to the sociopolitical situation of the Ottoman Empire and in search of freedom, higher education and a better life, many Armenians, including Armenian Evangelicals, moved to the U.S. Despite the challenges of a new culture, new language and sometimes even discrimination, they came together, formed communities, and worshiped together to strengthen each other's faith and support each other. They were able not only to survive but to thrive and benefit the larger community as well. It is important to recognize the spiritual and financial support provided by local non-Armenian churches and denominations in the early stages of the organization of our worshiping communities and the building of our worship places.

In the beginning, the majority of Armenians who arrived in the U.S. settled in the New England area. The first Armenian Evangelical Church established in the U.S. was Armenian Church of the Martyrs, Worcester, MA, which began in 1881. The congregation started coming together to worship at the home of Hovhannes Yazijian. When the number grew due to the arrival of new immigrants, the Church formally organized as a church body and the local American church, the Mission Chapel, kindly opened its doors to this faith community for their worship services. In the late 1890s, the leadership started thinking about erecting their own sanctuary. Their plan was realized at the end of 1901, and the first service in this building was held on Sunday, December 1 of that year. The pastor of the Church at this time was Rev. Khachadoor Benneyan. Almost all the other Armenian Evangelical churches established in the U.S. during this period had a similar experience. More immigrants came from the Middle East and



Armenian Evangelical Church of Martyrs, Worcester, MA - the first established Church in the U.S.

formed small worshiping communities. As new communities were formed, ministers from the Middle East would arrive as well and were trusted with the leadership and ministry of the church.

As the number of churches along the Eastern shore of the U.S. grew, they felt the need to come together and support each other's ministers and be strengthened by each other. As a result, in 1901, the Armenian Evangelical Union of Eastern States was formed to include all the Armenian Evangelical churches east of the Mississippi River.

One of the great accomplishments of the Armenian Evangelical Union of the Eastern States was the formation of the AMAA on June 7, 1918, at the Armenian Church of the Martyrs in Worcester, MA. Millions of Armenians lost their lives, and hundreds of thousands were uprooted from their homes during the Armenian Genocide, and the formation of the AMAA was a timely and crucial response to the immediate needs of our people, both spiritual and physical. The stated purpose of the AMAA was "to spiritually strengthen Armenian Evangelical churches and to rebuild those that had been destroyed." (Salibian p. 21).

The Founding of the AMAA was a crucial step in establishing and nurturing the growth of Armenian Evangelical churches around the world. The AMAA provided the Armenian Evangelical community with a sense of leadership while navigating the challenges of a very tumultuous time. The Association served as somewhat of liaison for Armenians trying to come to America. Its leaders provided spiritual, physical, emotional and financial support to those in need. (Salibian, p. 21).

Today, 103 years after its establishment, the AMAA has become a leading mission and humanitarian organization in the Armenian world. There is no place in the world with an Armenian community where the AMAA has been absent, and the members of the community have not been touched by its ministries and services. We thank God for blessing and growing this organization and for making it a blessing to many around the world.

In the early 1960s, an Armenian Evangelical Church was established in Toronto. Canada, and then in Montreal. When the churches in Canada joined the Union of Eastern States its name was changed to the Armenian Evangelical Union of Eastern States and Canada.



Pilgrim Armenian Congrega ional Church, Fresno, CA.

Tracing a separate history, just a few years after the establishment of the first Armenian Evangelical Church in the East, small groups of Armenians moved to central California and got involved in farming and trading their products. A small fellowship was formed that was welcomed and supported by one group of local Christians, after being rejected by another Christian community because of cultural difference. As a result, the first Armenian Evangelical Church was established in Fresno in 1897. This was the beginning of what is now the First Armenian Presbyterian Church of Fresno. The second Armenian Evangelical Church in Fresno, Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church, was established in 1901. These churches joined and formed a Union in 1908 called the Armenian Congregational Union of California which for the purpose of inclusivity was later renamed Armenian Evangelical Union of California.

The Merger and Formation of AEUNA

The massacre of Armenians by Ottoman Turks during World War I caused survivors to seek refuge as immigrants, with many coming to the U.S. As a result, new Armenian Evangelical churches were established both in the Eastern States and in California. Both the Unions of North America welcomed these new churches and became more organized.

For about sixty years, the two Unions existed as separate entities, but gradually they felt the need for closer cooperation. In the early 1960s, as travel became easier, the leadership in both Unions started attending each other's conventions. They got to know each other and see new opportunities. The challenges each Union was facing caused them to think, discuss and evaluate possibilities of a merger. A joint meeting of several Armenian Evangelical Unions (France, Near East and the two from the U.S.) in Paris in 1965 encouraged the two U.S. Unions to take practical steps toward the merger. Both Unions studied the possibility separately. Committees were formed, and in 1967 representatives of both Unions were asked to study the documents and proposals that were prepared for this purpose and to report to their respective bodies. Over the next few years, a constitution was drafted and discussed year after year in both Unions and their member churches which was finally voted on by member churches.

In his book, As I see it, explaining the process of the merger of the two U.S. Unions, Rev. Dr. V. Tootikian writes:

It all happened in October 1971 at the Armenian Congregational Church of Greater Detroit in Southfield, Michigan. The merger of two Armenian Evangelical Unions of the North American continent... produced the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America (AEUNA). It happened at the 70th (and last) annual convention of the AEU-East, held in conjunction with 52nd Annual Meeting of AMAA (p. 108).

The pastors and representatives of 22 members churches of the two Unions signed the merger agreement (four churches were absent and signed the agreement after the convention). During the convention, the oderators of the two Unions lit a unity candle as is typically done during a wedding service.

The AEUNA Today

During the last four decades, with the inflow of many Armenian immigrants from Armenia, Iran, and the Middle East to the U.S., many new churches were established along the West Coast, especially in the Los Angeles area. Some of these churches joined the AEUNA during the last 15 years, increasing the number of Union churches in the U.S. and Canada to 30. During the last decade, there were discussions about welcoming the three Armenian Evangelical Churches of South America as members of the AEUNA. This was voted on and approved in 2018 during the AEUNA Biennial convention in Burbank, CA, and brought the number of AEUNA churches to 33, out of which 15 are located in California (12 in Los Angeles area, two in Fresno, one in San Francisco) and one in Utah. There are 10 churches Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Michigan, and Illinois, and four churches in Canada. The South American churches are located in Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. For the complete and detailed list of the AEUNA churches please visit https://www.aeuna.org/churches-1.

The highest decision-making body of the AEUNA is the General Assembly that convenes every two years to worship and learn together, hear reports, discuss important issues and make decisions, and elect the Union's Board of Directors and the Minister to the Union to do the work of the AEUNA and implement the decisions of the General Assembly. The Board of Directors consists of 16 elected members that meet twice a year together with representatives of affiliated and recognized organizations. The recognized organizations that work closely with AEUNA are the Armenian Evangelical Schools of California (AESC), Armenian Evangelical World Council (AEWC), the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), Armenian Missionary Association of Canada (AMAC), the Armenian Theological Student's Aid (ATSA), and the Philibosian Foundation (PF).

The mission and leadership of the AEU-NA is summarized in the following two short paragraphs in the brochure that was recently prepared on the occasion of the 175th Anniversary of the Armenian Evangelical Church:

AEUNA's mission is to unite, equip, and support the AEUNA churches and community by supporting lay leaders, helping churches serve their congregations, equip-

> ping pastors, and training the next generation of ministry and lay leaders.

The Minister to the Union provides leadership and guidance to the pastors, churches, and ministries of the AEUNA as a full-time ministry leader. The volunteer/elected AEUNA Board of Directors is comprised of women and men, pastors and lay leaders, representing all regions in which AEUNA has churches and ministries.

There are six standing committees of the Board and one member of the Board chairs each one of these committees. The following is a list of these committees and their responsibilities:

Armenian Christian Heritage - Creates educational (and scholarly) materials and programs for all ages.

Evangelism - Church planting, events, and programs that evangelize the Word.

Ministry - Guides seminarians, approves scholarships, and approves ordination of the ministerial candidates.

Publication - Produces the AEUNA Journal FORUM and other publicity materials.

Stewardship - Promotes stewardship education, creates fundraising campaigns, and manages funds.

Personnel- The HR of the AEUNA. (from Brochure)

Two other committees area:

Youth - Oversees Armenian Evangelical Youth Fellowships.

AEUNA/AMAA Joint Home Missions Supports churches and church mission programs in the Americas.

Christian education has been an integral part of the Armenian Evangelical ethos from the beginning. As the AEUNA grew, different affiliated organizations and standing committees were formed to participate in the spiritual growth and Christian education of our members. At present, the Armenian Evangelical Youth fellowship (AEYF) of the East and of the West and the Armenian Evangelical Women's Fellowship (AEWF) of the West and of the East are very active in organizing joint events and retreats for the youth and women of the Union. These events create closer relationships and foster fellowship between our different church members and helps them grow in their faith and spiritual life.

Many Christians testify about the impact Christian camps have had in their personal faith journey. Therefore, camping ministry is an integral part of the ministry of any local church or church family and the AEUNA is not an exception. In 1977, dedicated Armenian Evangelical men and women in California who believed in camping ministry and evangelism among the youth started organizing summer camps for different age groups in rental facilities, which started to be called Camp AREV. "Camp AREV quickly became popular in the Armenian Evangelical community: it offered a natural setting to reach young people with the message of the gospel, and it had a Christian Armenian cultural focus." In 1992, with the generous donation of Edward J. Manishagian, a camp site was purchased by the AEUNA. Since then, annual summer and winter Camps have been organized at this facility in Frazier Park, CA for different age groups. These camps have had life-changing impacts on many campers. For details on Camp AREV's history,



Iglesia Evangélica Congregacional Armenia "Santísima Trinidad", Buenos Aires, Argentina.

please visit https://www.camparev.org/ history. The Camp is completing a major renovation and expansion phase to make the camp site appropriate for families and different groups at the same time. The first phase of this ambitious project will be completed in the very near future. The camping ministry of the AEUNA on the East coast is called Camp Arevelk. To this day, the organizers are renting different venues for their camping events. We pray that in the near future, we may have our own camp site on the East coast as well.

In the Middle East, there is a school adjacent to almost every church. The vision of having an Armenian Evangelical school in the U.S. was realized by the dedication of a group of visionary and hard-working church members in Southern California, and the generous donation of Elise Merdinian in memory of her sister Charlotte. The School opened its doors in 1982 with 13 students. Over the years and with the support and generous donations of other doners new classrooms were built, and the facility was expanded. Today about 200 students study at C&E Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School. Christian Education and morning chapels are an important part of the School curriculum, and over the years many students have graduated from the School and have become prominent leaders in the community.

The AEUNA has close ties and relationships with the Armenian Apostolic and Catholic churches and other churches in the community and is an active member of the larger Armenian community wherever it serves and enjoys their respect and trust.

A major challenge that the AEUNA faces today is that churches in some areas are becoming smaller due to migration of



C & E Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School Graduation - June 2017.



2018 Biennial Assembly Installation Service.

the younger generation to other states in search of better job opportunities, and the lack of inflow of newcomers. The other major challenge that we face is the lack of a leadership pipeline and the increasing number of the churches without a perma-

nent pastor. I pray that God may raise a new generation of lay and ordained ministers to serve in our churches and community. This requires a community effort and the participation of pastors, church leaders and families.



Camp Arevelk, Greenville, NY - Summer of 2019.

Rebuilding our Union

Anniversaries are great occasions for thanksgiving and also great occasions for self-evaluation. To assess the current situation of our Union and find ways to better carry our mission of uniting, equipping, and supporting our churches and community, a task force focused on the Rebuilding Vision of the AEUNA is visiting all the AEUNA church pastors and lay leaders. We pray that as we seek guidance and strength from God, and as we humbly listen to each other to understand and appreciate each other and we refocus on our Lord Jesus Christ and His mission, we may work together to rebuild the AEUNA into a stronger, thriving twenty-first century Armenian Evangelical Church.

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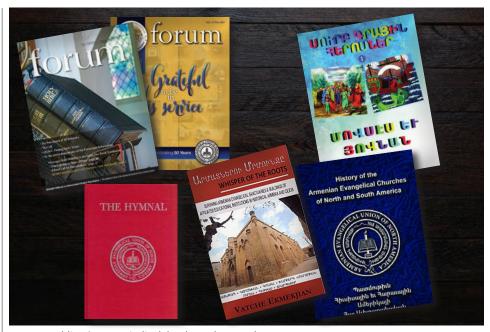
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* Hendrik Shanazarian is the Interim Minister to the AEUNA.

AMAA NEWS will in successive issues publish the history of the remaining Armenian Evangelical Unions worldwide.



AEUNA Publications: Periodical, books and Hymnal.





Camp AREV, Frazier Park, CA - Summer of 2017.

Armenia Medical Mission Continues to Emulate God's Love in Armenia



By Jay Graham*

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. **Matthew 9:35**

espite the ongoing Pandemic and after a year of intermission due to COVID, the AMAA's Armenia Medical Mission Team headed by Dr. Albert Phillips, with a small group left for Armenia from LAX on Wednesday, September 8 for their 13th Annual Medical Mission Trip in the Homeland. Three others from other parts of US joined them in Armenia to serve in the towns of Vanadzor and Stepanavan.

They arrived in Vanadzor on Saturday, September 11, and set up the first clinic at the Evangelical Church of Armenia in preparation for their first day of clinic on Sunday. On Sunday morning they attended Church Service and Dr. Phillips introduced the members of the Team and shared a message based on Luke 17:11-19. He reminded everyone of the Team's goal, which is not only to provide physical healing, but more importantly spiritual healing found only through Jesus Christ.

Clinic began in the afternoon and in one day they saw 60 patients. It was surprisingly smooth for the first day and they left for the day feeling encouraged. As the Team this year is smaller than usual, they recruited many from the Church to help with the clinic

and incorporated our Armenian physicians and pharmacist colleagues as partners in the clinic. They all played a pivotal role in the success and flow of the Clinic, helping with many high-traffic stations which optimized patient flow through the Clinic and crowd control. The camaraderie developed between the US Team and our Armenian brothers and sisters was delightful and very effective.

The second day of clinic in Vanadzor was another success! The Team began the day with a devotional from John 14:27. They were reminded of the Peace of Christ and to share it with the patients.

Following devotions and breakfast, the Team spent a full day seeing patients. Over 150 patients came through the clinic, including over 40 in the dental clinic, and there were 4 church services throughout the day.

The third and final day of the clinic in Vanadzor was a great success. The team saw another 65 patients, which brought the total patient count in Vanadzor to 276!

The Team tore down the clinic, loaded the bus, and made their way to Stepanavan to set up the clinic at the newly constructed AMAA Center.

The fourth day of clinic was the first in Stepanavan. In total, 133 patients were

seen throughout the day. Dr. Phillips again encouraged the team members and the Church by teaching from James chapter 2. He reminded us that faith without works is dead, and that the work the Team does is a result of our love for Christ and for the church in Armenia.

AMAA Armenia Medical Mission's fifth and final day of clinic was another great success! Total patient count for the week topped 550. The Team is so thankful for all the help from the Vanadzor and Stepanavan



Clinic in Vanadzor.

churches. None of this work would have been possible without them!

The Medical Mission Team has committed to return to Armenia for their fourteenth year in June 2022. If you have a desire to serve our brothers and sisters in Armenia or are interested in knowing more about the Armenia Medical Mission, please visit our website. The link can be found at AMAA's website www. amaa.org under "Projects." Medical and nonmedical, Armenian or non-Armenian speaking volunteers are welcome. We are humbled to see how God has grown the Medical Mission over the years. We can assure you that your generous donations to the AMAA earmarked for the Medical Mission go directly to the Armenian people and are only used for medications and supplies. Jesus during His ministry often met the physical needs prior to addressing the spiritual needs of those He met. We are committed to emulating His love in Armenia.



Thirteenth Annual Medical Mission Team.



*Jay Graham, husband of Michelle Phillips Graham, is one of the members of the 13th Annual Medical Mission Trip to Armenia.

AMAA Announces Two Major Gifts at AMAA Banquet in Fresno, CA

he Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA). headquartered in Paramus, New Jersey, announced two major gifts at its Annual Meeting Banquet in Fresno, California on Saturday, October 23, 2021. The Banquet was held in the Fellowship Hall of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church in conjunction with the Association's 102nd Annual Meeting, which was dedicated this year to The Artsakh Republic.

Zaven Khanjian, Executive Director/ CEO of the AMAA, announced that the



Dr. Bedros Manguikian.

Manguikian family have graciously funded \$300,000 to cover the cost of the AMAA's new Kindergarten in Stepanakert, Artsakh. The renovated Kinder garten will be named after Dr. Bedros Manguikian and is expected to open its doors in the Fall of 2022.

Mr. Khanjian also announced that Sarand Haygouhi Maranjian have graciously pledged a gift of \$125,000 to the

AMAA Shogh Center in Vanadzor, Armenia. The Center, an educational after school program for socially underserved families, will be called the Sarkis and Haygouhi Maranjian Shogh Center.

"The AMAA sincerely thanks these two families who are true examples of the legacy of Love, Faith and Service of the Armenian community, " said Mr. Khanjian. "The new and expanded Kin-



Sarkis and Haygouhi Maranjian.

dergarten will serve 200 children and their families in Stepanakert, Artsakh and will offer them an excellent start to their education. And, the new Sarkis and Haygouhi Maranjian Shogh Center will help spread the Christian spirit to children in Vanadzor, Armenia, creating a positive cultural and educational environment which will have a critical impact on their community."



The future home of Dr. Bedros Manguikian Kindergarten in Stepanakert, Artsakh.



Sarkis and Haygouhi Maranjian Shogh Center in Vanadzor, Armenia.

\$50,000 Raised at AMAA NY/NJ Orphan and Child Care Fundraiser for the Children of Armenia and Artsakh

n June 16, 2021, the AMAA NY/NJ Orphan and Child Care Committee held a virtual fundraiser for the children of Armenia and Artsakh. Under the capable and experienced leadership of Co-Chairs Seta Loshkajian Nalbandian and Vicki Shoghag Hovanessian, the AMAA NY/NJ Orphan & Child Care Committee registered an overwhelming success by raising over \$50,000, after a long lapse in the NY/NJ Committee being active, with its Caring Hearts, Changing Lives Fundraiser.

The dedicated Committee consisting of Lucienne Aynilian, Celeste Telfeyan Helvacian, Christine Kutlu, Magda Poulos, Jennifer Telfeyan-LaRoe, and Kathy Voskian, created and welcomed the Caring Hearts, Changing Lives Fundraiser through a novel way of virtual presentation. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and for the safety and the well-being of our guests, the Committee decided to hold this fundraiser event virtually. The program featured two dynamic Young Professional Emcees, Raffi Aynilian and Jennifer Voskian Gambino. Both Raffi and Jennifer grew up in the Armenian community in New Jersey, attending the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus.

Utilizing video technology, the program was presented through a computer link. Following a welcome by the Emcees and the Committee Co-Chairwomen, Dr. Nazareth Darakjian, AMAA President and Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO, presented supportive messages related to the importance of this project for the children of Armenia and Artsakh during these tumultuous times. Raffi and Jennifer presented various video clips and posed interactive and engaging questions to the supporters about Armenia and the Orphan and Child Care program. The video presentation highlighted clips of children whose lives have been improved through the AMAA outreach programs. Children gave testimonials as to how this fundraiser will assist them after their family had been torn apart due to war. Another individual spoke of how the Orphan & Child Care program began aiding her at age 12, and she has now become a professional chess player and member of the Armenian National Chess Team.

The Committee is forever grateful to the Grand Benefactors, Albert and Terry Bezjian of Los Angeles, who generously donated \$10,000 on the condition that the Committee raise an equal amount through this fundraiser. Through the compassionate donations of the supporters of the event, the Committee surpassed its expectations and received over \$50,000. Mr. Khanjian stated that "The spirit of Christian love and compassion demonstrated by the NY/NJ Orphan and Child Care Committee chairs, members, volunteers and donors sets the stage to rear a learned and illuminated generation who would only bring honor and goodness to our people. May God bless them all. "The AMAA is truly grateful and thanks all of our donors who supported this vital cause. For a complete listing of the donors on the AMAA website, go to: https:// amaa.org/caring-hearts-changing-lives/ AMAA's Orphan & Child Care programs are needed now more than ever. Through this successful Caring Hearts, Changing Lives fundraising event, the AMAA will



THANK YOU from children of Armenia.

continue to provide sponsorship of 1,900 needy children; visitations by social workers twice a year; food and clothing distribution; access to kindergartens, tutoring and community center; Medical and dental services; Christmas and Easter programs for 12,000 children in 27 AMAA Centers and 39 border villages; weekly summer camp sessions at Camp Sheen-Shoghig; Christian education programs; and daily Vacation Bible Schools.

If you would like to watch this amazing Caring Hearts, Changing Lives event, please visit the link: https:// amaa.org/caring-hearts-changing-lives/ Additional donations are welcome.



NY/NJ Orphan and Child Care Committee members.



Emcees Raffi Aynilian and Jennifer Voskian Gambino.

AMAA's Boston Orphan and Child Care Fundraiser Features Next Generation Giving

By Dianne Chilingerian*

hen planning began for the AMAA Boston Orphan and Child Care Committee's 2021 gala, no one could have predicted what a delightful and well-attended evening November 10 would be. Committee Chairs Susan Adamian Covo and Phyllis Dohanian were hopeful as they worked tirelessly with Committee members to plan an event to help children. On that crisp fall evening, the Wellesley Country Club provided a glowing backdrop, as did the warm renderings of soulful, classic Armenian melodies by educator, composer and guitarist John Baboian. The evening was lit with the energy and enthusiasm of stunning emcee host Miss Grand Armenia 2021, Kristina Ayanian, who was an exemplary advocate for bringing love and faith to children and the future of Armenia. Young attendees were also represented beautifully by Norayr Orchanian, who offered an inspiring invocation before dinner as well as a moment of silence in remembrance of martyrs who gave their lives in the recent Artsakh War.

Long-time AMAA Board Member Jeanmarie Papelian then enlightened guests about the work of the Avedisian School, an "amazing place," where students-many of whom come from families who are "desperately poor"-learn multiple languages, science, art, dance, and all go on to university. Her lovely daughter, Grace Bottomley, narrated a video presentation introducing the group to four such families. One of these families lived in a 130 square foot home, and tended sheep in lieu of rent. Guests may never forget the child who said with such depth of heart," I love my school."

A moment of excitement then followed when a very generous donation was announced in honor of Michele Simourian and her 30 years of service to the AMAA. Guests' energy and enthusiasm for multiple opportunities to contribute throughout the night - the wine pull, silent auction, live

> auction, child sponsorships, etc.- was evident, and many departed with one-of-a-kind designer items, events tickets, travel and sports packages; but more, they left with a feeling of gratification that comes only from the goodness of giving. As one guest so aptly said, "...I did not want to miss an opportunity to help," adding that we must never forget to appreciate all that we have.

In his message addressed to the attendees of the event, AMAA Executive Director/CEO Zaven Khanjian said: "Christ propelled Hope and a strong will to survive in us. Anchored on our Faith, the Grace of God and Good Samaritans like you, this nation is destined to resurrect, recover and rejuvenate. Thank you for anchoring AMAA's endurance and thank God for His infinite love."



Norayr Orchanian offers invocation.



Guitarist John Baboian.





*Dianne Chilingerian is a member of Boston Orphan and Child Care Committee.



Betty Nazarian Named Interim Principal of C & E Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School

he Board of Directors of the C & E Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School, located in Sherman Oaks, CA, announced that Betty Nazarian has been named Interim Principal of the School for the 2021–2022 academic year.

Mrs. Nazarian, who has held the role of Director of Academic Technology and Learning Innovation at Merdinian School since January 2021, began her tenure at the School as Technology/Curriculum Coordinator in 2019.

As one of her immediate goals as Interim Principal, Mrs. Nazarian deployed new academic initiatives for the new school year, including an updated English Language Arts curriculum. During the last several months, Mrs. Nazarian has also been instrumental in the research and development of Merdinian's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math) program, an educational approach that integrates science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics to foster students' spirit of inquiry and critical thinking skills. The program launched in September 2021.

As part of this innovative initiative, Merdinian has entered a yearlong partnership with the National Institute for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Education and begun the process to become a nationally recognized STEM campus with the endorsement of the National Certificate for STEM Excellence. The resources provided by the partnership will enable Merdinian to work with the Institute to coordinate, clarify and refine the school's STEM education policies and practices; empower teachers with professional development opportunities that will prepare students to be successful in STEM education and careers; and increase STEM opportunities for all students.

"It is vital that we focus on incorporating teacher training and development during the duration of the school year to ensure that our teachers are prepared to tackle the instrumental changes implemented this year and beyond," said Mrs. Nazarian.

Beyond her commitment to the advancement of Merdinian's academic offerings, Mrs. Nazarian has been an online instructor at Park University and served as a lead course developer at the University of Phoenix and Colorado Community Colleges. She has also taught courses at Holy Martyrs Ferrahian High School. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies and a Master of Arts in English from California State University, Northridge, a preliminary teaching credential from National University, and a Master of



Betty Nazarian, Interim Principal of Merdinian School.

Management from the University of Phoenix.

Established in 1982 by the Armenian Missionary Association of America, Armenian Evangelical Union of America and the United Armenian Congregational Church of Los Angeles, CA, the C & E Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School is the only Armenian Evangelical School in the United States. The School offers a broad-based curriculum that fosters academic excellence, high moral values, and spiritual enrichment in the Armenian Evangelical tradition. The School strives to create a safe and nurturing environment where every student receives

personal attention to become a successful

and responsible individual.

AMAA Executive Director/CEO Visits Prelate in New York

n Friday, October 15, 2021, Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO, had a
cordial visit with Archbishop Anoushavan
Tanielian, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy
of the Armenian Apostolic Church in New
York. During the visit the two discussed the continuing crisis facing the Near East Armenian community,
especially in Lebanon, and issues relating to the Armenian people in our Homeland Armenia, Artsakh, and
the Diaspora. The Prelate and the Executive Director
reiterated their unwavering commitment to be in the
service of our people.



Haigazian University Board of Trustees Meets in LA





he Board of Trustees of Haigazian University held its Fall season meeting on November 5, 2021, with the majority of the members attending in person at the UACC in Los Angeles, California and three members joining online. Having received the reports of the President and the various departments with appreciation, the Board discussed the road ahead and expressed its hope to hold the Spring 2022 meeting on campus in Beirut. The BOT sent a message of encouragement, love and hope to the HU community in Beirut, appreciating the resilience of the students, faculty and staff in these challenging times.

UAECNE Holds Its Annual Meeting



UAECNE Central Committee Chair Rev. Paul Haidostian, Ph.D., UAECNE President Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian and UAECNE Central Committee Recording Secretary Rev. Hrayr Cholakian.



UAECNE President Rev. Megrditch Karagoezian exhorts the newly licensed preachers, Badveli Asadour Mncherian (far right) and Badveli Shant Agishian (with his wife Mariana beside him).

he Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE) held its Annual Meeting in two parts under the theme "The Continuously Learning Church," based on II Timothy 2:2 "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." On May 8th the meeting was conducted fully online and on November 14-15, 2021 in person in the Nor Marash Armenian Evangelical Church in Beirut, with active online participation from Greece, Iraq, Syria, Australia and the USA. The meetings included worship services, reports of churches, ministries, schools, social and relief programs, times of sharing and elections. Most significantly, recent M.Div. graduates of the Near East School of Theology (NEST), Badveli Shant Agishian and Badveli Asadour Mncherian, were licensed to become preachers of the Union and pastor the churches of the Kessab area and the Emmanuel Church of Aleppo respectively.

AMAA Sundays Celebrated in the United States

MAA Sundays were celebrated in several cities throughout the United States during June, July and September.

AMAA Board member Ken Kevorkian visited the United Armenian Congregational Church in Los Angeles, CA on Sunday June 6 to celebrate AMAA Sunday. He shared a power point presentation from "A Year of Tribulations" with the congregation. " I had the privilege of addressing the UACC congregation and sharing one of my earliest childhood recollections with them," said Ken. "It was the annual visit my parents would have from Badveli Rejebian of the AMAA at our house. My dad came home from work and told me to clean up because we were having a very special guest. The AMAA has been a part of my life ever since. Since then, I have been to



Ken Kevorkian at UACC.

Armenia and Artsakh and I have personally seen the good works and accomplishments of the AMAA. I closed my presentation with what was and still is a very emotional issue for me - the Shogh Centers. I have witnessed the work that they do for the children and their families at the Centers. It is truly the hand of God at work. I closed by thanking the congregation for their continued support and asked for future donations."

Also on June 6, AMAA President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian preached in Armenian at the Holy Trinity Armenian Church in North Hollywood, CA. His sermon was based on Luke 6:12-16. He also shared a power point presentation from "A Year of Tribulations" with the congregation.



AMAA Sunday celebrated at the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church of Havertown, PA via Zoom.

The Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church in Havertown, PA celebrated AMAA Sunday on July 11. Zaven Khanjian, AMAA Executive Director/CEO, was the guest speaker at the virtual worship service. Mr. Khanjian shared experiences from his recent mission trip to Armenia, Artsakh, Lebanon and Syria, which he called "Hope is a Lifeline." He noted that on this mission trip he intended to carry hope to those he met, yet he brought back inspiration. He defined hopelessness as it applies to a cause, an individual or an effort. "When you are hopeless, you do not feel that you have independence, you depend on unreliable circumstances, and this leads to despair. And the remedy for despair is hope," said Mr. Khanjian. The AMAA is providing hope to the people from the countries he

visited, especially Syria and Lebanon. He shared the ways that individuals can join with the AMAA to lend a helping hand and to provide hope. Mr. Khanjian showed the video "A Year of Tribulation" which reviewed the many difficulties Armenians

around the world have endured this year, and none more keenly than those in Artsakh, Lebanon and Syria. He also told of one ongoing AMAA program, A Lifeline to Success for Syria and Lebanon, which offers families the opportunity to relocate into Armenia to safe and subsidized apartments.

At Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church of Downey, CA. - L to R: Deacons Chair Dr. Hraq Marqanian, Church Secretary Debbie Fermanian, AMAA President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian, Moderator Rosemary Saatjian and Senior Pastor Rev. George Terian.



After the worship service, there was an opportunity for questions. The main concern of those in attendance was learning about the most current situation in Armenia and Artsakh, and in Syria and Lebanon. He included ways that the Diaspora can join with the AMAA to be like an aqueduct to bring renewing hope to others. He closed his remarks by saying, "May you be filled with the waters of hope, so that you may share your hope with others."

On Sunday, September 12, Dr. Nazareth Darakjian visited Immanuel Armenian Congregational Church of Downey, CA. He delivered the English sermon and showed the video "A Year of Tribulations" to those in attendance. 🚾

AMAA Sundays Celebrated in Canada

uring the months of September and October, Harout Nercessian, AMAA Representative in Armenia, visited several churches in Canada to celebrate AMAA Sundays.

On Sunday, September 19, he preached at the **First Armenian** Evangelical Church in Montreal. The theme was Sacrifice and centered on Romans 12:1-2. "We live in a selfish/self-centered culture, yet God calls on us to adopt a mindset that thinks in terms of giving time, effort, service and money to others. Today we enjoy many blessings because others, especially our parents, sacrificed." He presented a video which showed the AMAA and AMAC's work in the villages of Armenia in response to the Artsakh war and in Lebanon focusing on Anjar and the AMAA school there. He challenged the congregation to pray for the



Harout Nercessian at the Armenian Evangelical Church of Toronto.

work of the AMAA/AMAC, to volunteer with the AMAC in Canada, to volunteer in Armenia, sponsor a child and donate to the AMAA/AMAC.

On Sunday, September 26, Mr. Nercessian preached at the Armenian Evangelical Church of Montreal. He preached on Man's insatiable appetite for personal value Արժեբաւոր զգալու մարդ արարածի չիագեցող ծառաւր. Following the sermon, he made a presentation on AMAA/AMAC's work in Armenia and Lebanon and appealed to the congregation for donations.

Mr. Nercessian preached to the congregation of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Toronto on Sunday, October 3. Following his sermon, he showed a slide presentation on the work of the AMAA/AMAC and explained various programs and activities. He focused on the village programs, the Basmajian KG in Askeran, and on Lebanon and the AMAA's child sponsorship program.



Harout Nercessian at the First Armenian Evangelical Church of Montreal.



Harout Nercessian at the Armenian Evangelical Church of Montreal.



Ordination Service in Lyon

unday, October 17 was a celebratory day in Lyon, and became the capital city of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of France.

All seven Pastors of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of France came to surround their youngest child, Paul Siwajian, as well as the faithful from the parishes of Lyon and Décines.

Each with his own words and his own style manifested to Pastor Paul and his wife Maria, their affection, their exhortations, their encouragement and their fraternal solidarity. A spirit of joy and great spiritual fervor presided over this recognition of ministry. At a time when vocations in France for religious ministry are rare, this pastoral consecration has brought a new breath of youth, freshness and hope.

During his testimony, the candidate recalled his spiritual journey. He was born and raised in Alfortville. It was in the Armenian Evangelical Parish of the 8 Manouchian Group of Alfortville, that his faith was nourished, and he received his call to serve God and his neighbor.

We wish him a blessed and fruitful ministry.

May God raise up a new generation of Shepherds following the example of Pastor Paul Siwajian.

Consécration Pastorale à Lyon

n ce dimanche 17 Octobre, Lyon est devenue l'espace d'une célébration, la capitale des Églises évangéliques arméniennes de France.

Tous les 7 Pasteurs de l'Union sont venus entourer leur benjamin: Paul Siwajian, ainsi que les fidèles des paroisses de Lyon et de Décines.

Chacun avec ses mots et son style a manifesté au Pasteur Paul et son épouse Maria, leur affection, leurs exhortations, leurs encouragements et leur solidarité fraternelle. Un esprit de joie et de grande ferveur spirituelle présidait à cette reconnaissance de ministère. Dans une époque où les vocations en France pour le ministère religieux se font rares, cette consécration pastorale a apporté un souffle nouveau de jeunesse, de fraîcheur et d'espoir.

Lors de son témoignage, le candidat a rappelé son parcours spirituel. Il est né et a grandi à Alfortville. C'est dans la paroisse évangélique arménienne du 8 Groupe Manouchian d'Alfortville, que sa foi a été nourrie et qu'il a reçu son appel pour servir Dieu et son prochain.

Nous lui souhaitons un ministère béni et fructueux.

Que Dieu suscite une nouvelle génération de Bergers à l'image du Pasteur Paul Siwajian!

Ձեռևադրութիւն Լիոնի **U**Ε₉

ոկտեմբեր 17, 2021-ի լետմիջօրէին, տօնախմբումի մը առիթով, Լիոն դարձաւ մայրաբաղաբը Ֆրանսայի Յայ Աւետ. Եկեղեցիներուն։

Արդարեւ Միութեան եօթը հովիւները եկած էին շրջապատելու իրենց կրտսեր պաշտօնակիցը՝ Պատ. Փօլ Սվաճեանը, ինչպես նաեւ Լիոնի եւ Տեսինի եկեղեցիներուն անդամները։

Իւրաբանչիւր հովիւ, իւրայատուկ խօսբով եւ ոճով, Պատուելի Փօլին եւ իր կողակից Մարիային հաղորդեց իր սէրը, յորդորը, քաջալերութիւնն ու եղբայրական աջակցութիւնը։

Ուրախութեան եւ հոգեւոր ջերմեռանդութեան մթնոլորտ մը կը տիրէր այս ձեռևադրութեան ամբողջ ընթացբին։

Ներկայ ժամանակաշրջանին, երբ Ֆրանսայի մեջ կրօնական կոչումները հազուագիւտ կը դառնան, սոյն հովուական ձեռնադրութիւնը երիտասարդութեան, թարմութեան եւ յոյսի նոր շունչ մը բերաւ։

Իր վկայութեան ատեն` թեկնածուն վերյիշեց իր հոգեւոր ընթացբը։ Ծնած ու մեծցած էր Ալֆորվիլ, որուն Մանուշեան Խումբի փողոցի թիւ 8 հասցէին գտնուող Յայ Աւետ. Եկեղեցիին մէջ է որ իր hաւատբը աճեցաւ եւ ինք կոչում ստացաւ ծառայելու Աստուծոյ ու իր ընկերին։

Օրհնեալ եւ պտղաբեր պաշտօնավարութիւն մը կը մաղթենք իրեն։

Թող Տէրը Վերապատուելի Սվաճեանի օրինակին հետեւող հովիւներու նո՜ր սերունդ մը յառաջ բերէ։ 🌉

Ազդեցիկ



Բայց Աստուած երբեք չի մոռնար կարիքաւորներուն։ Տառապեայներուն յոյսը երբեք չի կորսուիր։ **Uադմոս** 9. 18

Զաւէն Խանճեան*

նչպէս ընդունուած է «Վտանգ» (Jeopardy) հեռատեսիլային ներկայացման մէջ, ես կր փնտրեմ հարց մը, որ լաւագոյնս կը համընկնի վերը նշուած պատասխանին հետ։ Անոնք կրնան բազմաթիւ

Վերոլիշեալ «պատասխանը» անընդհատ կը պտտէր մտքիս մէջ, երբ կր շրջագայէի Մայիս եւ Յունիս ամիսներուն այցելած երկիրներուս մէջ. Սուրիան, Լիբանանը, որոնք կազմած են AMAA-ի համաշխարհային առաքելութեան ծառայութեան դաշտի առիւծի բաժինը, ինչպէս նաեւ Հայաստան եւ Արցախ, որոնք կ՛արժանանան ներկայիս առիւծի բաժինին։

«Պատասխանը» մշտապէս զբաղեցուցած է իմ մտաւոր տեսադաշտր, նոյնիսկ հարցի մասին առհասարակ մտածելը։

Ճամբորդութեանս ամէն քայլափոխին, իմ ունեցած իւրաքանչիւր շփման հետ մէկտեղ, ես տեսած եմ այն համատարած ազդեցութիւնը, որ AMAA-ն ունի մարդոց վրալ, կեանք առ կեանք։

Հաւատարիմներու խորունկ աչքերէն, մինչեւ նուաճողներու կենսուրախ հայեացքը, երազողներու սեւեռուն հայացքներէն, մինչեւ յուսացողներու մշուշոտ աչքերը, ես ականատես եղած եմ վերոնշեալ պատասխանի մարմնացման։

Ձեզմէ ոմանք հետեւեցան իմ լատուկ առաքելութեամբ կատարուած այցերուն AMAA-ի ֆէյսպուքեան էջին մէջ։ Միւսները կընան հետեւիլ անոնց AMAA News-ի անցեալ համարով։ Անոնք անսովոր ուղեւորութիւններ չէին AMAA- ի Գործադիր Տնօրէնին համար, ան որ կանոնաւոր կերպով կ՛այցելէ առաքելութեան ազդեցութեան գօտիները։ Մինչդեռ այս տարի անսովոր էին բոլոր այս աշխարհագրական տարածքներուն մէջ տեղ գտած հանգամանքները։

Արցախեան պատերազմին մէջ հսկայական տարածքներու սրտանմլիկ կորուստր։ Հայաստանի ազգային սուգը՝ պատերազմին մէջ կորսուած հազարաւոր մատաղ ու պայծառ կեանքերուն համար։ Մէկ գիշերուան մէջ <u>Լիբանանի միջին խաւին փոխակերպումը աղբատութեան</u> եւ լուսահատութեան։ Տասնամեալ պատերազմը ձեւով մր յաղթահարած Սուրիոլ մէջ պատժամիջոցներու պատճառով ծայրայեղ գնաճէն տուժած համայնքը։

Ան պատրաստ աշխարհը դեպի փակուղի տանող համավարակի յարձակումը։

Ինչ աննախադէպ տարի էր այս բոլոր երկիրներուն մէջ, անոնց շարքին, սեփական հարկի տակ՝ ԱՄՆ-ի մէջ հանդիպած ճգնաժամերու բազմակի շերտերուն պատճառով:

«Աշխարհի մէջ նեղութիւններ կ՛ունենանք։ Բայզ քաջ եղէք, ես լաղթած եմ աշխարհին»։ Յովհաննէս 16. 33

Չորսշաբաթեալ լուզառատ ուղեւորութենէն վերադառնալէ ետք, ինձմէ խնդրեցին երկու խօսքով պատմել, թէ ինչ տարած էի հետս եւ ինչ բերած եմ հետս։ Ինձմէ երկար ժամանակ չպահանջեց՝ այդ պատասխանները ամփոփելու երկու պարց, բայց փառահեղ բառերու մէջ։

ես ՅՈՅՍ էի տարած եւ ինծի հետ ՈԳԵՇՆՉԱՆՔ բերած եմ։

ՅՈՅՍ ներշնչելը միշտ եղած է AMAA-ի հիմնական առաքելութիւնը։ ՅՈՅՍԸ AMAA-ի տարածած, բաշխած եւ ցանած ամենաթանկացին միջոցը եղած է։ ՅՈՅՍՈՎ է համեմուած աշխարհի ծայրերը հասցուած Աւետարանի Բարի լուրը։ ՅՈՅՍԸ դեղամիջոց է լուսահատութեան եւ րնկճախտի դէմ, աչքի սպեղանի՝ մշուշոտ տեսողութեան համար, վերածնունդի, երիտասարդացման եւ վերակենդանացման հրաշագործ բանայի։

ՅՈՅՍԸ փրկօղակ է, փրկօղակ՝ դէպի յաջողութիւն, երջանկութիւն, անկախութիւն, կեանք եւ փրկութիւն։

AMAA-ի պաշտօնական տիտղոսաթերթի վրայ գրուած է Մեծ լանձնարարականը, ուր կ՛րսուի՝ «Գնա աշխարհ եւ քարոցէ Աւետարանը բոլոր արարածներուն»։ Աւետարանը բարի լուր է։ Բարի լուր, որ «Աստուած երբեք չի մոռնար կարիքաւորներուն, տառապեայներուն լոյսը երբեք չի կորսուիր»։ AMAA-ն կր կրէ Յոյսը, ուր այ որ ան երթայ, իսկ ՅՈՅՍԸ կր դնէ յաջողութեան հիմքը, կր տանի դէպի երջանկութիւն, անկախութիւն, իր մէջ կ՛ամփոփէ Կեանքը եւ կր խարսխէ Յոլսր Փրկութեան մէջ։

-Ինչպէ՞ս կը բնութագրէք AMAA-ի առաքելութիւնը ամբողջ աշխարհի մէջ։

-ԱՉԴԵՑԻ՛Կ

Ազդեցիկը այն պատասխանն է, որուն ես ականատես եղած եմ, հպած եւ զգացած եմ գայն իմ լատուկ առաքելութեամբ կատարած ամբողջ այցելութիւններուս րնթագքին։

Մեր հաւաքական վարձքը մեր այն գիտակցութեան մէջ

t, nn AMAA-h wnwptլութիւնը ԱԶԴԵՑԻԿ

Շնորհակայ եմ, որ այդ առաքելութեան մաս կր կազմեք։



* Չաւէն Խանճեան Գործադիր Տնօրէնն է Ամերիկայի Յայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան։

Յոյսի Առաքելութիւն Մո

Վերջին Լուրեր Լիբանանէն

Վեր. Նշան Պագալեան*

օտաւորապէս հինգ տարի առաջ ես եւ Մարիան նոր առաքելութեամբ մր դէպի Լիբանան ուղղուեցանը՝ ծառայելու Մերձաւոր Արեւեյքի Հայ Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիներու Միութեան (ՄԱՀԱԵՄ) եւ Հայկացեան Համայսարանի մէջ, Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան (U<UC) til Common Global Ministries Board-h (CGMB) երկկողմանի գործակցութեամբ։ Սոյն երկու մարմինները նոր նախաձեռնութեամբ մեր ծառայութիւնը կ'երաշխաւորեն, նկատի առնելով թէ միայն նիւթական աջակցութիւնը չէ որ կ'օգնէ, այլ նաեւ հայ համայնքներու մարդուժ հայթայթելով։

Մեր ծառայութեան սկիզբը երբ Լիբանան փոխադրուեցանք, ՄԱՀԱԵՄը տարբեր իրավիճակի մէջ էր։ Ինչպէս ամէնուն ծանօթ է, Հոկտեմբեր 2019էն սկսեալ երկիրը տնտեսական արագրնթաց վայրէջքի վրայ է, եւ ՄԱՀԱԵՄի բոլոր կառոյցները կր պայքարին իրենց հոգեւոր, դաստիարակչական, մարդասիրական եւ մշակութային կեանքը կենսունակ պահել։

ՎԱՅ ԱԻԵՏ. ԴՊՐՈՑՆԵՐ

Աշնան՝ Լիբանանի Հայ Աւետ. դպրոցները իրենց դռները բացին նոր տարեշրջանին համար։ Ինչպէս անցեալ տարի, համավարակի վերիվայրու մները նկատի առնելով, աշակերտները անձամբ կամ առցանց իրենց դասերուն կր հետեւէին։ Հայկական դպրոցներու այս առաքելութիւնը անհրաժեշտ է հայ ազգին գոյատեւման, մանաւանդ ներկայ մթնոլորտին մէջ ուր ծնողըներ լաճախ օտար վարժարաններ կ'րնտրեն իրենց զաւակներուն «աւելի լաւ» ապագալ տալու համար։

Այնճարի հայաւանին մէջ, Հայ Աւետ. Երկրորդական Վարժարանը իր կրթական եւ ազգային ծրագիրը արդիական եւ հնարամիտ միջոցներով կր հետապնդէ. այս ջանքերը վերջերս կարգ մը միջազգային մարմիններու ուշադրութիւնն



Այնճարի Վարժարանը եւ Գիշերօթիկը սէր եւ յոյս կը դնէ նոր սերունդին մէջ։

ալ գրաւեց։ Աշակերտներու աւանդական ձեռագործներու աշխատանքը, եւ կամ իրենց կառուցած ջերմոցին մէջ քիմիական պարարտեցուցիչներէ ցերծ բանջարեղէն մեծցնել սորվիլը, բոլորը կը կատարուին տեսիլքով։ Քրիստոնէական խոր սիրով, ամբողջ անձնակացմը հրաշքի համացօր աշխատանք կը տանի վտանգուած եւ յատուկ կարիք ունեցող փոքրերուն հետ, որոնք իրենց խնամքին տակ կր վերածուին ինքնավստահ, հոգատար եւ ուշիմ հայորդիներու։

ՎԱՅԿԱՉԵԱՆ ՎԱՄԱԼՍԱՐԱՆ

Հայկագեան Համալսարանի իր աշակերտութիւնը բազմազան համայնքներէ կր բաղկանալ, ոլյալ արաբ թէ հայ, որոնք կու գան զանազան դասակարգներէ եւ կրօնքներէ։ Հայկացեան Համայսարանը նաեւ երկխօսութեան աշխոյժ դերակատար է, եւ անցեալ ամառուալ միջ-կրօնական սեմինարներու շարքը ապացոյց է։ Սակայն նաեւ իր հայ եւ քրիստոնէական դիմագիծը պահել կ'աշխատի՝ աշակերտական եւ ուսումնական ոլորտներու մէջ։ Ուսանողները բոլոր խաւերէն իրենց մասնակցութիւնը կր բերեն բարեսիրական ծրագիրներու, եւ մեծապէս օգտակար եղան 2020ի աղիտալի պայթումէն վնասուողներուն։

Հայկազեանը կը շարունակէ մշակել եւ զարգացնել իր Հայագիտական բաժանմունքը, սփիւռքահայութեան եւ արեւմտահայերէնի կարեւորութիւն կու տայ հայագիտական գրադարանի, գիտաժողովներու եւ հրատարակութիւններու միջոցով. նոյն ատեն Հայաստանի ակադեմական կառոյցներու հետ իր կապերը կը զօրացնէ։

Մարիան Հայկագեանի վարչական աշխատանք կր կատարէ Չարգազման (Development) եւ Շրջանաւարտից գրասենեակէն ներս։ Աշխարհացրիւ հազարաւոր շրջանաւարտներու եւ բարեկամներու ելեկտրոնական շրջաբերականներու միջոցով կը հաղորդէ Համալսարանի կեանքին նորութիւններու մասին։ Ան նաեւ Համալսարանի ընկերային ցանցի հարթակներու մէջ իր բաժինը կը բերէ, լուրեր եւ նորութիւններ հաղորդելով։

ՎԱՅ ԱՐԵՏ. ՎԱՍՏԱՏՈՐԹԻՐՆՆԵՐ

Այս ամառ, Աստուծոյ պահպանութեան վստահելով՝ ՔՋԱԿի մէջ Միութեան զանացան համագումարներ տեղի ունեցան – երիտասարդաց, պատանեաց եւ մանուկներու, ինչպէս նաեւ տիկնանց։ Մարիան իր մասնակցութիւնը կր բերէ ՔՋԱԿի խնամակալութեան մէջ։ Անոնք այս անստոյգ ժամանակներու մէջ կր դիմագրաւեն շատ մր հարցեր եւ դժուարութիւններ։ Նոյեմբերի հրդեհները ՔՋԱԿի շէնքներուն ազդեցին, բայց հրշէջներու աշխատանքով եւ Աստուծոյ ողորմութիւնով՝ կրակները կրցան մառել եւ վնասները նուագագոյնի պահել։

Ընկերային ծառայութիւնը որ ՄԱՀԱԵՄը կը կատարէ, մասամբ իր Քրիստոնէական Ընկերային Կեդրոնի միջոցաւ, մասամբ ալ գործակցաբար Հայց. Առաքելական Եկեղեցիին հետ է, ինչպէս ՔԱՀL-Հայ Ծերերու Տունը եւ Ազունիէի Ազգային



Միութեան բոլոր կառոյցները կը շարունակեն իրենց առաբելութիւնը նոր տարեշրջանին։

Բուժարանը։ Մարիան ՄԱՀԱԵՄը ներկայացնող անդամներէն մէկն է Ազգային Բուժարանի խնամակալ մարմինի մէջ, եւ՝ նման ՔԱՀԼի վարչութեան, այդ մարմինը մեծ ջանք կը թափէ հայ ծերերուն հոգ տանիլ։ Իր ժամանակը նաեւ կը տրամադրէ երէցկիներու լանձնախումբին, որ կր պատրաստէ միացեալ պաշտամունքներ, տարեկան համագումար, եւ այլ ձեւերով նեցուկ կր կանգնի անոնց։ Վերոյիշեալ բոլոր մարմիններու ծառայութիւններու մէջ ԱՀԱԸ հաւատարմաբար շարունակած է նեցուկ կենալ տարիներու ընթացրին, եւ մանաւանդ այս տագնապայի օրերուն։

ՎԱՐՉԱԿԱՆ ԱՇԽԱՏԱՆՔ

Վերջին երկու տարիներու ընթացքին իմ պարտականութիւններս որոշ չափով փոփոխութեան ենթարկուեցան։ Չարգացող դժուարութիւնները նոր պահանջներ ներկայացուցին։ Հաղորդամիջոցներու եւ ընկերային ցանցի աշխախատանքները աւելի զարգացան, մինչ Միութեան գործունէութիւնները դէպի առցանց դրութեան վերածուեցան։ Միութեան կառուցւող նոր կայքէջին համար աշխատանքս կը շարունակեմ, եւ լոյսով եմ որ լառաջիկալ ամիսներուն պատրաստ պիտի րլյալ հանրութեան գործածութեան համար։ Դերս՝ եկեղեցիներու երաժշտական աշխատանքներու աորնչութեամբ, վերածուեցաւ տեսանիւթի եւ ձայնագրութեան աղբիւրներ եկեղեցիներու հայթայթողի։ Բեմերէն քարոզելու առիթներս որ զանազան վայրեր երթալով կ՚րնէի, առցանց դարձան։ Համավարակի սկիզբնական շրջանին՝ տեսանիւթ պատրաստելու նոր աշխատանթի սկսալ ՄԱՀԱԵՄի միացեալ պաշտամունքներու շարքի պատրաստութեան համար։ Միայն երկու ելոյթ ունենայէ ետք, «Արմիս» երգչախումբի խմբավարութիւնս դադրեցաւ, սակայն լոլսով կր սպասեմ որ նոր տարուան մէջ ետ միանալու առիթը պիտի ըլլալ։ Իսկ մինչ աշխարհը երթայով աւելի արագրնթաց համացանցի կր վստահի, Լիբանանը եւ մանաւանդ իր երիտասարդութիւնը կը մնայ լետամնաց վիճակի մէջ, աւելի յուսահատեցնելով նոր սերունդը, զիրենք աւելի շուտ մղելով ուրիշ երկիրներ փոխադրուելու։

ՆՈՐ ԱՌԱԶՆՈՐԴՆԵՐ

Սակայն այս բոլորէն վեր՝ աշխատանքս Հայ Աւետ. աստուածաբանական աշակերտներու հետ գերագոյնը կր սեպեմ։ Ասկէ աւելի անհրաժեշտ եւ հրամալական կարիք չկալ։ Պատիւ եւ ուրախութիւն է հանդիպելու այս հովուական գործի համար պատրաստուող երիտասարդներու հետ, ծանօթանալու իրենց եւ իրենց ծանօթացնելու Հայց. Աւետ. Եկեղեցւոլ պատմութիւնը եւ հիմնահարցերը։ Ոչ միայն ՄԱՀԱԵՄի աշակերտներու հետ կ'աշխատիմ (որոնց հետ նաեւ Միութեան մէջ գործող ուրիշ երէց հովիւներ այ բաժին կր բերեն), այլ նաեւ Հայաստանի Հայց. Աւետ. Եկեղեցւոյ Միութենէն եկած աշակերտներու հետ։ Ես եւ Մարիան կր զգանք թէ եթէ Տէրը միայն ասոր համար մեզ Լիբանան առաջնորդեզ, կ'արժէր այս առաքելութեան մէջ մտնել։

ԼԻԲԱՆԱՆԻ ՏԱԳՆԱՊԸ

Մինչ երկիրը եւ ընդհանրապէս Միջին Արեւելըը, ինչպէս նաեւ Հայաստանը եւ Արցախը, տագնապալից ժամանակներ կ'ապրին, բոլորս Աստուծոլ շնորհքին աւելիով պէտք է վստահինք։ Լիբանանի աւանդական քաղաքական ղեկավարութիւնը կր շարունակէ իր անցեալի շահախնդիր վարմունքով կարավառել, ի վնաս երկրին եւ երիտասարդներու ապագային։ Լիբանանահայ երիտասարդութիւնը, Լիբանանի բոլոր երիտասարդներուն պէս, մեծ թիւերով կր հեռանան երկրէն՝ կայուն ապրուստ վաստկելու եւ արդար միջավայրի մէջ ապրելու համար։ Իսկ անոնք որոնք կ'րնտրեն մնալ, կամ որոնք կարողութիւնը չունին ուրիշ տեղ երթայու, ա՛լ աւելի գուրգուրանքի եւ նեցուկի պէտք ունին։

Պատմական մեծ աղէտ մր ապրող երկիր մը, որ 4 Օգոստոս 2020 թ.ի նաւահանգիստի պայթումը ապրեցաւ, պէտք ունի լսելու լոյսի ուժեղ պատգամ։ Նաւարի մէջ պտրտող ժողովուրդ մը Աստուծոլ լոյսին ծագումին եւ իր տուած համբերութեանը պէտք ունի, որպէս զի կարենալ անցնիլ մահուան շուքի այս ձորէն։ Ուրեմն անշահախնդիր եւ նուիրեալ անհատներու եւ կազմակերպութիւններու ներկայութիւնը երկրին համար նշոյլ մը լոյս եւ լոյս պիտի տայ։

ՅՈՅՍԻ ԱՌԱՔԵԼՈԻԹԻԻՆ

Ուրախութիւն է Յիսուսի սէրը բաժնել, գիտնալով թէ երբ մեր հացր ջուրերուն վրայ կր ձգենք, եւ երբ պատրաստ հողին մէջ աւետարանին սերմը կր ցրուենք, Աստուծոյ օգնութեամբ պարապ չդառնար։ Տէրոջը գօրութեան եւ ողորմութեան վստահելով, կ'օգնենք որ հայ ազգին ժառանգութիւնը եղող եւ Ցեղասպանութենէ վերապրող եւ իրենց պատմական հողերէն աքսորուած ժառանգորդները հաստատ մնան իրենց նոր կեդրոններուն մէջ՝ Հայէպ թէ Պէյրութ, Քեսապ թէ Այնճար։ Շատերու աղօթքներով եւ քաջալերանքով է որ Հայ Եկեղեցին, մանաւանդ Հայց. Աւետարանական Եկեղեցին, Քրիստոսի լոյսը կը գոյացնէ իր շուրջիններուն, եւ կ'րյյալ լոյսի փարոս մը աշխարհացրիւ մեր եկեղեցիներուն եւ Միութիւններուն։

Երբ Սուրբ Հոգիին ներշնչումով ներկայ րլյանք ուրիշներու հետ իրենց նեղութեան ատեն, Աստուած յոյս կը ներշնչէ, թէ՛ իրենց մէջ, թէ՛ այ մեր մէջ։ Ուր այ գտնուինք, երբ Քրիստոս է մեր գօրութիւնը եւ լոյսը, «լոյսը ամօթով չձգեր. վասն գի Աստուծոլ սէրը մեր սիրտերուն մէջ տարածուած է Հոգւոյն Սրբոյ ձեռքով, որ մեզի տրուեցաւ»։ (Հռովմ. Ե.5)

Շնորհակայութեան մեծ պարտք ունինք, նախ՝ Աստուծոլ, իր անընդհատ ներկայութեան եւ ներշնչման, եւ ապա՝ Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանչական Ընկերակցութեան եւ Common Global Ministries Board-ին, իերնց աղօթքներուն եւ կարեկցութեան համար։ 🍱



* Վեր. Նշան եւ Մարիա **Պագալեաններու** ծառալութիւնը կ'երաշխաւորեն AMAA-ը եւ Common Global Ministries Board-ը։

Յայոց Ցեղասպանութեան Նուիրուած Խաչքար Յուշարձանի Բացում եւ Նուիրում Փասատինայի ՄԷջ

իրակի, 12 Սեպտեմբեր 2021-ը յատուկ օր մըն էր Յայ Կիլիկիա Աւետարանական Եկեղեցիին եւ Փասատինայի գաղութին համար։ Առտուալ պաշտամունբեն ետբ ժողովուրդը ուղղուեցաւ եկեղեցւոլ ւշրջափակ ուր Յալոց Ցեղասպանութեան նուիրուած խաչքար լուշարձանի մը բացումը եւ նուիրումը կատարուեցաւ։ Խաչբարը նուիրուած էր Եկեղեցւոլ նուիրեալ անդամներէն եւ Յոգաբարձութեան նախկին Ատենապետ բարերարուհի` Տիկ. Անայիս ՏԷրեան Պուլղուրճեանի կողմէ՝ ի յիշատակ իր ամուսնոյն՝ ուսուցիչ եւ տնօրէն՝ Արամ Պույղուրճեանի եւ ի լարգանք 1915-ի ցեղասպանութեան նահատակներուն։

եկեղեցիի Երէց Յովիւ Վեր. Սերոբ Մկրտիչեանի խօսբէն, աղօթբէն, «Յայր Մեր»ի երգեցողութենեն եւ Կիլիկիա մաղթերքի երգեցողութենեն ետք, ժողովուրդը իամախմբուեցաւ Եկեղեցւոյ Տէրեան սրահէն ներս ուր տեղի ունեցաւ ճաշ։ Փառբ եւ պատիւ Յօր Աստուծոյ եւ պայծառութիւն հայրենքին ու Յայ ազգին։





REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: CATALOG LIBRARIAN

The Armenian Missionary Association of America, Inc. (AMAA) is seeking a qualified individual involving the cataloguing of various media types in Scan here to the AMAA Library. Individual must have fluent reading and writing skills, in Armenian, and preferably has experience

For more information please visit:

with computerized classification databases.

https://amaa.org/request-for-proposal-catalog-librarian/

The AMAA Board of Directors and staff wish to extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the following deceased friends.

* Grace Arsenian Fresno, CA

Sarkis Balabanian Yerevan, Armenia

- * Adrian Kalfayan Debusscher – Brussels, Belgium
- * Astrik Deirmendjian Louisville. CO

Perlant Der-Garabedian Beirut, Lebanon

Eleanor Gertmenian Oakland, CA

- * Adele Der Manuelian Belmont, MA
- * Lucy Der Manuelian Belmont, MA
- * Virginia Devejian Flushing, NY
- * Lucy Garabedian River Edge, NJ

- * Eulalie Godfrey Caruthers, CA
- * Beverly Hedison Lowell, MA

Isabelle Hodgson Concord, NH

* Marguerite Iskenderian George Mekenian Brooklyn, NY

Sylva Khoshafian Waltham, MA

- * Karnig Kouyoumdjian Lawrenceville, NJ
- * Lillian Markarian Cranston, RI

Samuel Matossian Pasadena, CA

Mahwah, NJ

* Margaret Melkonian La Grange, IL

- * James Minas Fresno, CA
- * George Nazarian Mobile, AL
- * Rosette Nezamian Davenport, PL
- * Alice Tavitian Whitman, MA
- * Robert Yacubian Greenfield, MA

Memorial donations designated for AMAA

Nancy Avakian

Nancy Avakian, wife of the late Rev. Karl Avakian, passed away in Fresno, CA on October 1, 2021 at the age of 82. Her given name being Armine Nancy, she had a strong framework of faith that was built from her youth in San Fernando,



CA, where she was born on August 5, 1939. Nancy was the daughter of Jacob Malootian and Effie Roumian, who were from Turkey. They were very loving parents to Nancy. Although Nancy's parents had been in the Armenian Genocide, her mother always had faith in God, and because of God's grace and her mother's faithfulness in raising her in the church, Nancy accepted Christ in Sunday School, at the age of twelve.

Nancy attended Westmont College in Santa Barbara, CA, for two years. Along with her general education classes, she took classes in Bible, and her love of studying the word of God continued to grow. She completed her education at California State University, Fresno, where she received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Elementary Education, and a K-8 Teaching Credential. Nancy taught elementary school in Burbank, CA and then returned to Fresno to teach at Winchell Elementary School. Of the different grades that she taught, she especially enjoyed teaching third grade.

It was here, in Fresno, where Nancy met her future husband, Karl Avakian. They were married in 1963 and blessed with two children, Laura and David. Nancy poured all of her love into her family. Her love for her family and their love for her were only surpassed by their love for the Lord.

Nancy and her husband, Karl, a pastor, shared the same calling for ministry. She ministered alongside Karl to the youth at Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church, in Fresno, CA; in the pastorate at the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus, NJ; and in the church conference pastorate, to the 24 churches of the Armenian Evangelical Union in the United States and Canada.

Nancy always had a calling to study and teach others the word of God and was faithful in doing so. Throughout different times in her life, she taught children Sunday School and Vacation Bible School and led high school women's, young women's and women's Bible Studies, even up until recent times. She loved seeing the impact God's word had on peoples' lives, and seeing people grow in faith in Christ.

Nancy delighted in reaching out to others, through phone calls, cards, and visits with friends and their families. She was a good listener and would always pray for people and encourage them. Always young at heart, she loved people and related well to people of any age. She was not just a friend, sister-in-Christ, or Bible study leader; she was family and made you family.

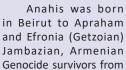
She was a wonderful, loving and caring Christian woman who continued to enlarge her circles of friendships all of her life.

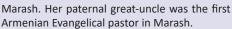
Nancy was preceded in death by her parents, Jacob and Effie Malootian, her aunt, Armenouhie Roumian, and by her beloved husband Karl, of 46 years. Nancy is survived by her two children, Laura and David, her sisterin-law, Veronica Keoshkerian, and her husband, Daniel, and by her nephews and nieces and their families.

A memorial service and celebration of Nancy's life was held at Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church of Fresno, on October 16, 2021.

Anahis Jambazian Derian

Anahis Jambazian Derian joined her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, on Tuesday, October 26, 2021.





Anahis journeyed across the Middle East as a young woman, pursuing a medical career. She served and worked as a nurse in Aleppo and Derzor, Syria.

Moving to the U.S., she first worked as a nurse and then helped build family businesses. She contributed generously over decades to Armenian Evangelical churches, missions and institutions. The Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church Derian Hall, a cabin at Camp Kchag in Lebanon, the Armenian Evangelical Theological Seminary social hall in Yerevan, the Hall of the Evangelical Church of Armenia in Dilijan, the Shamlian-Tatikian School Choir Room, the Charlotte & Elise Merdinian Armenian Evangelical School Auditorium, Haigazian University's Armenological Library, the Camp AREV new Dining Hall and a new wing of the Camp AREV Lodge are some of the projects she funded.

As a devoted and dedicated member of Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church, she served multiple terms as Moderator of the Church Council, President of the Ladies Auxiliary and organizer of the Vacation Bible School.

With her first husband Henry Derian, she raised two children, her niece and nephew Nancy Jambazian and Paul Jambazian. After Henry passed away, she married Aram Boolghoorjian, who joined his Lord last year.

A funeral service was held on December 4 at the Armenian Cilicia Evangelical Church of Pasadena, CA followed by interment at Mountain View Cemetery in Altadena, CA and a memorial dinner at Cilicia Church.

Memorial donations are designated for Cilicia Church and Camp Arev.

Olympia Jebejian

Olympia Jebejian, of Englewood Cliffs, NJ, an avid reader and admirer of the AMAA News, unexpectedly entered her eternal rest on October 19. 2021. She was 81.



Born in Beirut, Lebanon in 1940 to parents

Stepan and Marie Tabibian, Olympia graduated with honors at the age of 15 from the Armenian General Benevolent Union's Tarouhi Hagopian Girls' High School. She then studied Chemistry at the American University of Beirut, eventually receiving both her bachelor and master's degrees. While a student at A.U.B., she met Hagop Shahe Jebejian, her partner for life in every sense of the word. They were married in Beirut in 1967, by then Bishop Karekin Sarkissian, the future Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians. Following university, Olympia taught math and chemistry in Beirut at the Armenian Evangelical College and then Haigazian College.

Seeking a brighter future for their family, Olympia and Shahe emigrated to the United States in 1969 and settled in Fort Lee, NJ. They welcomed their son Sarkis later that year, followed by their daughter Maria in 1973. They built an active social life among old friends from university and new friends in America, all of whom affectionately referred to her as "Ombi."

In 1970, Olympia embarked on her decadeslong professional passion, joining the Chemistry Department at Barnard College of Columbia University, rising eventually to Director of General Chemistry Laboratories and Dean of Premedical Students, Over her 40 years at Barnard, Olympia taught and mentored thousands of future scientists, professors and physicians, which was a lifelong source of pride and achievement for her. For many years Olympia led Barnard's Higher Education Opportunities and Science and Technology Entry Programs dedicated to providing bright and motivated students who were economically disadvantaged access to higher education.

Olympia's family life was equally important to her. She was overjoyed by the marriage of her daughter Maria to Bryan Stepanian in 1999, and then had the pleasure to see her son Sarkis marry Maral Diratzouian the next year. For the entire extended Jebejian family, Olympia was a beacon of love and warmth, hosting hundreds of family events, including many Christmases and New Year's Eves. Equally important, the central value she placed on education and professional achievement was an inspiration to her children, her nieces and nephews and other young, loved ones. In particular, she was a model example of a working mother to many in her family and community.

Active in Armenian community life since childhood, Olympia remained dedicated to the Armenian language and culture throughout her life. Notable among her many endeavors, she taught for almost 20 years at the Kirikian Armenian School of St. Thomas Armenian Church as well as at the Khrimian Lyceum of the Diocese of the Armenian Church.

Olympia's greatest joy in recent years were her four grandchildren, for whom she was an endless source of love and support. They loved her dearly and referred to her as "Mammas," hanging on her every word. Highlights from recent years were her joy in watching Robby (20) start college in 2019, her anticipation of Shahe (17) and Arto (17) applying to college this fall, and Katia's (16) Sweet Sixteen Party in September when Olympia's speech stole the show.

Olympia was predeceased by her brother Jivan Tabibian and sister Ani Hagopian. She is survived by the love of her life Hagop Shahe, her children and grandchildren, and literally hundreds of family and friends who will miss her very deeply.

Funeral services were held at St. Thomas Church, Tenafly, NJ, on October 22.

Alexander Lewis III, M.D.

Dr. Alexander Lewis III passed away at home in Lafayette, CA on September 29, 2021. He was 76.

Alex was born on November 25, 1944 in Long Beach, CA and grew up in Pittsburgh, PA. He attended Ursinus



College then received a Doctor of Medicine degree at Hahnemann Medical School (now Drexel University - Hahnemann University Hospital). Dr. Lewis returned to California and completed a residency in dermatology at Stanford University, where he went on to serve as an Adjunct Clinical Associate Professor of Dermatology at Stanford School of Medicine for many years. He was a Fellow of the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery. He maintained a private dermatology practice in Walnut Creek, CA until his retirement in 2016.

On top of Mt. Tamalpais one rainy June day in 1976, he married Cecilia Wilson Lewis, with whom he spent the rest of his life.

Dr. Lewis was a healer, an adventurer, and an artist. He cared for countless patients over the years and took pride in performing exquisite surgeries. He loved sailing the waters of the San Francisco Bay on his boat, the Seal. Dr. Lewis traveled extensively, from boyhood through his final years. Visits to Rome and the island of Capri in the 1960s gave him a lifelong appreciation for la dolce vita and Italian culture. Nothing made him happier than planning the perfect trip. His travels included exploring classic destinations and off-the-beaten-path corners of Japan, Canada, England, Ireland, France, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Russia, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Turkey, and Armenia. Back in Northern California, he loved driving the beautiful backroads of the Bay Area in his Porsche. He especially enjoyed visits to Point Reyes, Tomales Bay, and other spots along the Pacific coast. Even closer to home, you could see him buzzing down the winding wooded roads of Lafayette on his mint green vintage Vespa scooter.

Dr. Lewis possessed a deep sense of curiosity and unwaning desire to learn, especially about the past. He felt a deep connection to his mother Alice's Armenian heritage, which he honored through research into her family's Genocide survival story and involvement with Armenian causes. He shared his love of history with both his children, visiting countless archaeological sites, monuments and museums with them over the years.

Dr. Lewis was also a talented photographer, a cinephile (what a Fellini fan!), a car aficionado, an avid astronomer, and the author of a true crime novel set in the 1970s Bay Area. Above all else, Dr. Lewis was an immeasurably loving husband and father. He was predeceased by his parents Alexander Lewis Jr. and Alice Kabakjian Lewis. He is survived by his wife Cecilia Lewis, children Allison Lewis and Alexander (Sander) Lewis IV, granddaughter Clara Wertheimer, and brothers Dennis Lewis and Brady Lewis.

Funeral services and burial were held on October 7, at Oakmont Memorial Park & Mortuary in Lafayette, CA. The family asks that memorial contributions be made to the AMAA.

George Mandossian

George Kevork Mandossian of Los Angeles, CA, beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, relative and friend passed away peacefully on October 17, 2021. He was 87.



A leader of the Tekevan Cultural Asso-

ciation of the United States and Canada (TCA) and the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL), George played an important role in the Armenian Church and the Armenian General Benevolent Union. He was a founder and guiding spirit of the TCA Arshag Dickranian Armenian School and a member of the founding council of the Montebello Armenian Martyrs Memorial Monument. He enjoyed his profession passionately. As a civil engineer, he has left his stamp on many structures in the Los Angeles area.

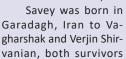
George Mandossian was born in Jerusalem on February 24, 1934. He was the third of four children (Krikor, Alice and Fimi) born to the late Antranig and Haiganoush Mandossian.

He is survived by his loving wife, Hasmig Mandossian; son, Ohan Alex Mandossian and his children, Gabriel and Breanna; daughter, Taleen Petrossians and husband Arthur Petrossians and their children Alex and Grace; sister, Alice Melkonian; sister-in-law, Hilda and Dr. Walid Ghurabi and family; brother-in-law, Dr. Armen and Azniv Goenjian and family; niece, Arda and Ara Artinian and family; nephew, Ara and Terri Melkonian and son; former spouse, mother of Ohan and Taleen, Carol Mandossian; and in-law, Zina Petrossians, and the entire Mandossian, Melkonian, Petrossians, Goenjian, Ghurabi, Artinian, Hadjian, Malek, Nazarian, Kazanjian families and relatives and friends.

Funeral services, followed by interment, were held on November 9 at Hollywood Hills Forest Lawn Mortuary Park, Old North Church. Memorial donations may be made to the AMAA to benefit the Orphan and Child Care Program and AMAA Educational Support in Lebanon and the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada.

Savey Tufenkian

Savey "Shoushig" Tufenkian, wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother passed away on August 25, 2021 at home in Glendale, CA.





of the Genocide. She received her high school education in Beit Mery, Lebanon and received a scholarship to attend American International College in Massachusetts, where she graduated in 1954. Savey and her younger brother Kosti moved to California in 1955. Together they founded Western Disposal Company later known as Western Waste Industries.

She married Ralph Tufenkian of Los Angeles in 1956. Savey was a kind and generous person who was eager to help her community, both local and abroad. After the tragic loss of her son Richard in 1990, Savey and Ralph established the Richard Tufenkian Preschool which has remained closest to her heart until the end.

In addition to the Preschool, she played a major role in the founding and continuation of many Armenian organizations such as the Armenian International Women Association, AMAA Orphan and Child Care, USC Institute of Armenian Study, and many more.

Words cannot express the void left in the lives of those who loved her. Savey is survived by her husband of 63 years, Ralph Tufenkian, son Greg and Caroline Tufenkian, and daughter Sandra and Paul Kalemkiarian. She is cherished by her grandchildren Sara, Lisa and Lena and their spouses, and Sam, Michael and Max Tufenkian. She was also blessed with three great grandchildren Micah, Ani and Ambrose. She will be missed by her brother Kosti and Marian Shirvanian, many nieces and nephews and extended families.

Funeral services were held on September 9 at the United Armenian Congregational Church, Los Angeles followed by the burial at Forest Lawn, Hollywood Hills.

AMAA Bookstore - Featured Books



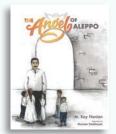
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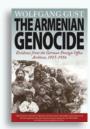
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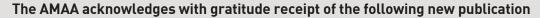
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Turkish Instinct or Praise of GENOCIDE Radical Islam and Armenian Genocide – Wahi Kachichyan

Դրախտի Սեմին Արձակ եւ Բանաստեղծութիւն – Միբայէլ ԵուսուՖեան

Բանալի Բառեր Աստուածաշունչի եւ Նշանաւոր Մարդոց Խօսբերու – Վեր. Եսալի Սարմացեան

Մեծ Երազի ճամբուն Ուղեւորները եւ Վամապարփակ Պատմութիւն Ռամկավար Ազատական Կուսակցութեան (Դ. Յատոր) Ռամկավար Ազատական Կուսակցութիւն (1921-1931) – Յակոբ Վարդիվառեան

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Please consider being a part of delivering hope and joy to these children. For as little as \$15 your donation covers the cost of sending a box, filled with surprises and gifts, to a child and bringing the spirit of Christmas directly into their arms! Seeing the joy on their faces is our gift and a much-needed reminder of God's love.



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